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THE MOST one can say of the naval conference to date is that it has completely lived up to expectations. Within a few hours after its opening the Japanese trotted out their demand for parity under new phraseology—a "common upper limit." When pressed to define their objective more specifically, the Japanese delegates first said that the "common upper limit" was to apply to three countries only —Great Britain, the United States, and Japan. Later, when it became evident that the smaller powers were joining the two Anglo-Saxon nations in opposing Japan's demand, their position shifted, and the conference was told that all states should have the same theoretical rights of equality. Meanwhile, in bilateral conversations with the British, the Japanese declared that they were willing to concede that England had greater defensive requirements than Japan, but insisted that they must have full parity with America. Since Britain and the United States must maintain fleets in the Atlantic as well as the Pacific, parity for Japan means unchallenged supremacy in Eastern waters. This neither of the other governments can grant while maintaining the existing theory of navalism. If battleships, heavy cruisers, and airplane carriers are of any value, it is for offensive purposes. But why spend hundreds of millions of dollars, the navalists say, if at the same time you allow your potential enemy to have a more effective fleet than you have. To this there is no answer as long as a country is committed to the use of its navy for imperialistic ends. Since Japan cannot give in, for reasons of national prestige, the deadlock appears unbreakable. Unless the United States is willing to make substantial concessions, we might as well recall our delegation and at least save that expense.

STEP BY STEP the Japanese military appears to be imposing its will on China despite the resentment which these moves have engendered. Not satisfied with the semi-autonomous government which has been set up at Peiping with the consent of Chiang Kai-shek, the Japanese have seized Tangku, an important port near Tientsin, and Kalgan, a strategic city at the terminus of the caravan route to Ulan Bator (Urga) and Soviet Siberia. The first gives Japan control over practically all of North China's foreign trade, while the second puts it in a position to bring pressure on Outer Mongolia. Unless checked by foreign powers, the chances are that the Japanese will continue until they obtain full control of the five provinces which they originally intended to include in the North China autonomy movement. Genuine international opposition is unlikely, however, unless the Chinese themselves organize effective resistance to Japanese penetration. The brutal police attack on the Peiping students who were demonstrating against Japanese aggression may prove the spark that will kindle such resistance. Because of China's age-old respect for scholarship, Chinese students have long played an influential role in national affairs. It was the students who were primarily responsible for the overthrow of the notorious pro-Japanese Anfu clique in 1919. Students were in the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in 1926-27. The fact that they have been effectively suppressed since the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 makes their present uprising the more significant. The students have been particularly impressed by the League's sanctions against Mussolini, believing that if they can organize opposition in China the League can scarcely refuse to take action against Japan.

DR. FRANCIS E. TOWNSEND, who has won the support of millions of hard-pressed, elderly Americans (and of their sons and daughters-in-law) by telling them that Congress can save the nation by the simple and highly gratifying device of giving old people $200 a month which they must spend immediately, has the two old parties worried. The more remote threat is that Dr. Townsend will incite a third-party movement. The immediate cause for alarm is the questionnaire which has been sent to every member of Congress asking for a yes-or-no answer to three questions. The Congressional victim is asked whether he is in favor of the Townsend plan, whether he voted for the McGroarty bill last session, and whether he could be relied upon to help pass a bill embodying the plan at the coming session. To ask a politician any question requiring a straight yes or no is cruel enough. To inquire, for purposes of

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publication—the answers are to be printed in the *National Townsend Weekly* just before Christmas—whether he is in favor of a plan to pay $200 a month to his elderly constituents is to put him in the position of the gentleman who was asked if he had stopped beating his wife. The simple yes or no leaves no space for pointing out that the proprietors of the Townsend plan have already extracted more money from the old people than the old people will ever get out of the Townsend plan; that the McGroarty bill provides for a pension "not to exceed $200 a month" but sets no minimum; that on other issues, such as labor, the Townsendites are extremely reactionary; and that the transactions tax by which the plan would be financed would bear heaviest on the poor. No wonder the old parties are worried. Making promises that cannot be kept is nothing new for Democrats and Republicans, who have used the trick successfully for decades. The trouble is that Dr. Townsend is, so far, content with forcing the promise and passing on the job of executing it to those in office. The continued agitation for the Townsend plan should make it clear to Congress that the demand for security is too strong to be satisfied by the Administration's feeble gesture in that direction, the social-security act.

WE WISH that the Democrats who are so exuberant over the New Deal and the Republicans who are pleading for a curtailment of government expenditures would take time off to study the two latest and most reliable estimates of unemployment. The first, made by Robert Nathan, formerly consultant of the Committee on Economic Security, places the number of wholly unemployed in September at 10,915,000—a decline of about 4,000,000 since March, 1933. This figure is closer to the estimates prepared by the Labor Research Association and other radical agencies than to those of the more respectable organizations, such as the National Industrial Conference Board. It is considerably lower, however, than the latest estimate of the American Federation of Labor, which has just been issued after more than a year of careful revision and which puts the number of jobless in October at approximately 11,650,000 as compared with 15,740,000 in 1933. Thus while business activity has recovered more than half of its losses in the past thirty months, unemployment is still three-quarters as great as at the depth of the depression. At this rate full recovery to the 1929 level of production would leave about 7,500,000 without work. Less than half of this number are now employed on government projects, and neither of the major political parties, so far as we are able to observe, has anything to offer the remaining four million. Yet these unemployed millions, if even partially organized, could hold the balance of power at the next election.

A PARTICULARLY HORRIBLE vigilante attack took place on November 30 in Tampa, Florida, where three men, members of a radical political group, the Modern Democrats, were seized by a band of men, among whom they recognized at least two policemen, and were flogged, tarred, and feathered so severely that one of them has since died. The mayor, the chief of police, local newspapers, and even the American Legion have denounced this outrage, and local officials have promised to do everything possible to discover and convict the perpetrators of it. However, after much questioning of policemen, Chief Titsworth declared that he had not been able to discover that any of his men had had a part in the affair. Joseph A. Shoemaker, the man who died, was said by his fellow-victims to have been subjected to a more severe beating because he called one of the gang, a policeman, by name; just before his death he regained consciousness long enough to repeat the name to various officials who were at his bedside waiting for it. The condition in which Shoemaker was found, and as a result of which he died, was described by the attending physician and printed in the Tampa *Tribune*. Man's inhumanity to man was never better illustrated, and it was undoubtedly the nature and extent of the violence that provoked the widespread protest.

NO DOUBT THE PROTEST is for the most part genuine. That vigilante sympathies also exist, however, is indicated by a comment in the Fort Myers *News-Press*. This newspaper declared that a similar attack in Fort Myers would doubtless result in a similar outcry, "for the record," but that in private men "who knew who did it and why" would say that the victims got what was coming to them. It went on:

> However, the chastisement administered the other day was, by all accounts, unnecessarily brutal and the people of Tampa may be saying that this time the boys went too far. Laughing off boisterous corporal punishment is one thing and condoning ruffianism just short of homicide is another. There are better ways of combating a nuisance than beating a man half to death, and whatever the authorities in Tampa may think of vigilante justice they would do well to quench both the cause and effect before they have a sure-enough murder case on their hands.

There are two items to add to this. Since Shoemaker was so inconsiderate as to die, the authorities of Tampa have a sure-enough murder case on their hands. And the Tampa *Times* called the *News-Press* editorial "a more charitable view" of the case. The Tampa Defense Committee, the American Civil Liberties Union, and other organizations which are attempting to further legal prosecution of it may want to call this attitude by another name.

ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY must be constantly cheered by the status of academic freedom in New York City's high schools. The latest invasion of student independence took place recently at the instigation of Stuyvesant High School authorities. A group of Stuyvesant students had met in a private home to consider the formation of a chapter of the American Student Union, the projected coalition of Socialist and Communist student organizations. Police summoned by school officials invaded the apartment, broke up the meeting, and seized both the student who resided there and James Wechsler, former editor of the Columbia *Spectator* and an organizer of the Union, who was to have addressed the meeting. When Wechsler asked if he was under arrest, the police replied, "That's up to the principal." After having been detained for about two hours, the two were freed at the suggestion of the principal, Sinclair J. Wilson, who was apparently disturbed by the form rather than the content of the incident. The episode also disclosed the existence of student "spies" who submitted a detailed report of the meeting, carefully distinguishing between those who had attended to listen and those who had gone to "break up

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the meeting." Mr. Wilson later denied that he had wanted the police to raid a private home; he explained somewhat lamely that he had asked for plain-clothes men to act "in case a crowd gathered in the street." It is indisputable, however, that the principal was arbitrarily assuming jurisdiction over the extramural activities of his students, and that, if the youthful spies were acting "spontaneously and voluntarily," as Mr. Wilson claims, nothing has been done to curb their ardor. Perhaps the most shocking phase of the incident, aside from the obvious illegality of the raid, was the intimidation of a student in the presence of school authorities by police who loudly declared, "We'd like to get you alone." Superintendent of Schools Campbell and Mayor LaGuardia have both declared that they will hold immediate investigations. Such an inquiry, if boldly prosecuted, should serve to illuminate the whole system of repression in the city's schools. Stuyvesant High School is not the only offender; the use of police, espionage, "red lists," and student "vigilantes" has been frequently reported in schools throughout the city, and the "Americanism" drive is being faithfully pursued.

PRESIDENT MENDIETA of Cuba has been forced to resign, a victim in the end of the force which brought him to power—American imperialism. For some months the United States has been seeking to organize a "free" election in Cuba, to escape the charge that the government is hand-picked by Washington. Difficulties developed when the old Liberal Party—formerly headed by ex-President Machado—split, and a minority group supported the coalition candidacy of Miguel Mariano Gomez. The Supreme Electoral Tribunal declared this combination illegal, whereupon the coalition parties threatened to withdraw from the elections. An appeal was made, doubtless at the suggestion of the State Department, to President Dodd of Princeton University to act as arbitrator. On December 6 Dr. Dodd devised a formula which in effect reversed the tribunal's decision. This precipitated the withdrawal of the strong Democratic Party headed by former President Menocal, while the dominant faction of the Liberal Party issued an emphatic statement charging American interference. On December 11 Mendieta resigned, and José Barnet, former Secretary of State, was elected Provisional President. With Mendieta out of the way, the Democratic and Liberal parties have agreed to participate in the elections on January 10, which will give at least the appearance of a genuine contest. All other parties, representing an overwhelming majority of the Cuban people—the Cuban Revolutionary Party, Young Cuba, the Agrarian Party, and the Communist Party—are illegal. The government terror, the emergency repression laws, and the complete suppression of civil rights have made it impossible for them to conduct an electoral campaign. The United States may attain its desire of having a "constitutional" President in Cuba, but the island will be no nearer freedom than it was under Machado.

MAYOR LAGUARDIA of New York City, who introduced foreign affairs into his job by revoking the permit of a German masseur because the Nazis were undemocratic, has again taken sides in an international argument by attending the Italian Red Cross rally at Madison Square Garden on December 14. It is true that the Mayor confined his remarks to the noble purposes of the Italian Red Cross, but he was the only speaker who paid much attention to this aspect of the affair. Supreme Court Justices Cotillo and Pecora, who also spoke, frankly championed the cause of Italy in the Ethiopian war, and urged Italian-Americans to support the civilizing and liberating efforts of Mussolini and the Italian army in Africa. The purpose of the meeting was described in the *Progresso Italo-Americano* for November 17 in vivid language.

> To once more demonstrate that the hearts of the Italo-Americans beat with the heart of the faraway Motherland and that each and every compatriot who resides in this Motherland of adoption is ready to give all in his power to help Italy fight back the brutal international coalition led by England with the utmost resistance and give a chance to the Italian soldiers who are now in Africa to write another epic page of glory in the history of civilization . . . and also it must serve to show that the five millions of Italian-Americans who live in the United States are ready to immolate themselves on the altar of their great Motherland and will answer . . . an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Even allowing for the impetuous Italian temperament, these look like fighting words, and they might well have warned the Mayor of New York to avoid even the appearance of sponsoring them by his presence at the meeting. Free speech being still a cherished American tradition, Italo-Americans have every right to immolate themselves as loudly as they like, however much they may run counter to American foreign policy by doing so, but for the highest official of a great city to appear in his public capacity while such an attitude is being urged is something else again.

A GRAVE SITUATION has lately been uncovered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, of which J. Edgar Hoover is director. It seems that a number of applicants for jobs—not to mention a number of men enlisting in the army during the month of November—have criminal records! About 7 per cent of the 7,500 army applicants were discovered to have been accused or convicted of crime, including robbery, embezzlement, forgery, breaking and entering, and unlawful wounding. Fifty-three of the 7,500 have served penitentiary sentences. We do not know the statistical relationship between those of us who so far have kept out of jail and those who have not, but 53 out of 7,500 amounts to .7 per cent, which somehow sounds like a pretty good batting average for the non-jailbirds. However, Mr. Hoover had worse statistics to offer; of 197 persons applying for chauffers' and cab drivers' permits in Kansas City, Cleveland, Omaha, Salt Lake City, and Honolulu, forty-eight, or about 25 per cent, had criminal records, and ten had served prison sentences. What these figures are intended to prove we do not know. Perhaps that no man who ever was accused of a crime, or went to prison for it, should have another job. Perhaps that the employees of the Bureau of Investigation have too much time on their hands in which to look up finger-print records. If a man, even an ex-criminal, is out looking for a job which involves real work at regular wages, it might be more sensible, not to say kinder, to forget his past. He more than other men should have learned the lesson that crime doesn't pay; bringing up his criminal past to plague him may merely convince him that honest work doesn't, either.

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The League's Hour of Trial

NOTHING has occurred in the past week to lessen in any sense the shamefulness of the "peace" plan drawn up by Sir Samuel Hoare and Premier Laval. Publication of the terms has only accentuated the incredulous indignation with which the proposal was received in all but the most reactionary circles. The Labor Party had predicted that the Conservatives would make a "deal" with Mussolini after the election, but no one, not even the severest critic of British imperialism, was prepared for such a prompt and complete repudiation of the government's campaign promises. Nor is there any convincing explanation why Hoare and Baldwin should have so dishonored their word at this time. A number of influential Tories, it is true, have never trusted the League and have always favored concessions to Italy. But though this group gained somewhat in the elections, it is still a small minority in the Conservative Party. Neither Hoare nor Baldwin had any known obligations to this clique, and the promise of an extensive rearmament program should have been enough to offset any threatened rebellion from the right. Various other interpretations have been offered, none of which is very plausible. It has been successively suggested that Sir Samuel was bought off by French concessions on the Continent, that he was so ill that he was unable to cope with the wily Laval, and that the King himself intervened to demand a settlement. Speculation of this type merely suggests that the real explanation is either unknown or of a character which is not discussed openly. Could it be that the Britain government knew that an oil embargo would bring Italy to its knees and that it shrank from the inevitable consequences of Mussolini's overthrow? Whatever the reason, it is obvious that Baldwin made a serious tactical blunder in estimating the effect of his sell-out on public opinion, both at home and abroad. The ten million voters who indorsed sanctions in the peace ballot have apparently not changed their convictions.

Isolationist Americans have been quick to seize on the proposed concessions to Mussolini as final evidence of the bankruptcy of the League of Nations. The same groups which accused the League of representing the interests of British imperialism when it declared sanctions against Italy, are now bitter against the leading powers of the League for abandoning Ethiopia to Mussolini's wolves. This is somewhat less than fair. True, the League has stopped short of effective action against Italy. It has procrastinated when promptness might have gained it substantial support in the United States. Yet its value has never been so convincingly demonstrated as in the past week. Had there been no international organization of this type, the dismemberment of Ethiopia would have proceeded quickly and without challenge. The meeting of the Committee of Eighteen at Geneva furnished a sounding-board by which the protests of the small powers could be effectively heard. Britain's commitments to the League gave the opposition the whip hand against the government. In Paris the left parties have been stirred into renewed activity by Geneva's unfavorable reaction to Laval's unhappy proposal. Throughout the world Britain and France stand condemned, not so much for deserting Ethiopia as for violating their obligation under the Covenant. It is possible that the League may yet fail to prevent a peace which will reward the aggressor, but no one can deny that its existence has been a constant stumbling-block for Mussolini. Should it survive this crisis, it might well be an insuperable obstacle to Hitler.

However, the supreme test of the League is yet to come. While the Hoare-Laval "peace" proposal is unlikely to reach a vote in its original form, tremendous pressure may be brought to bear on the Council to accept it with slight modifications. Rejection of the scheme will not in itself be sufficient to save the principle of collective security. It is not enough that Mussolini should be denied a reward for breaking the Covenant; his illegal campaign in Ethiopia must be brought to a halt. This will certainly prove more difficult than it appeared a fortnight ago. France and England are no longer in a position to furnish the moral leadership for a strengthened program of sanctions. The sympathies of the United States have been definitely alienated, and can only be restored, if at all, after some time has elapsed. It is possible, however, that the widespread indignation against the proposed gift to Mussolini will end in much more drastic measures against Italy than would have otherwise been possible. If Laval should be overturned in France and a left government come to power, we might expect a shift in French policy at Geneva. Similarly, if Hoare were forced to give way to Eden, we could easily envision a much-chastened England rigorously applying an embargo on coal, oil, and steel.

The decision of the Council may be known before these words are read. It is expected to uphold Ethiopia in rejecting a plan which would give Italy more than its armies can conquer. The Soviet Union, Turkey, Bulgaria, the Little Entente, the Scandinavian countries, and the British dominions have already indicated their opposition to the scheme. Eden has served warning that he does not expect to push it against the opposition of the smaller states. Under the circumstances Mussolini is likely to reject it also. This would leave the Italo-Ethiopian controversy farther from settlement than ever. Apparently the point has been reached where a showdown on sanctions is inevitable. The minor penalties adopted by the League have been more discomfiting than crippling to Italy. Caught up in a frenzy of patriotic fervor, the Italian people are still solidly behind Mussolini; the difficulties which the armies have encountered in Ethiopia are probably unknown at home. Popular feeling being what it is, Il Duce could scarcely agree to any terms which did not pay the criminal a bounty for defying the law. But should further sanctions be imposed, should Badoglio encounter additional setbacks in Africa, and should the United States extend its embargo to include oil, cotton, scrap steel, copper, and other war materials, the solidarity at Rome would eventually melt away. This would require months of constant vigilance on the part of all supporters of collective action; it would necessitate the sacrifice of millions of dollars in trade; but the final cost would be infinitely less than that involved in a return to the anarchy of militarism. The question of peace or war for this generation hinges very largely on the manner in which the League meets this crisis.

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A New Low for the New Deal

WHEN a President contemplates appointing a new United States Attorney for the Southern New York district, it is customary for him to ask the advice and aid of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. In appointing Lamar Hardy to this post last month, the President ignored the custom. He had good reason for the omission. The Hardy appointment is one of the worst the New Deal has made, and the Bar Association might have failed to recognize the heavy political considerations which dictated it. As a result we have the unusual spectacle of leaders of the conservative Bar Association protesting against a New Deal appointment because they feel the appointee is not qualified to enforce the important securities legislation of the New Deal, while the Administration itself stands by and tries to pretend that nothing is happening. Since New York is the country's financial center and the probable site of the most important securities prosecutions to come, the issues raised by the Hardy nomination are national, not local.

It is already known that Senator Norris, as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, intends to demand a thorough investigation of Mr. Hardy before confirmation is voted upon. Mr. Hardy's obvious ineligibility for his new office stems from his connections with the State Title and Mortgage Company. *The Nation* described these connections last week in an article entitled The Mortgage Scandals and the New Deal. It may be repeated here that the State Title and Mortgage Company was one of seventeen "guaranteed"-mortgage-certificate concerns taken over by the Insurance Department of New York State in August, 1933, leaving some 300,000 investors to nurse their wounds and through cumbersome and costly reorganization proceedings recoup what they could of $1,500,000,000 invested in mortgage certificates. To investigate State Title and Mortgage, all the Senate Judiciary Committee has to do is read the October 5, 1934, report of the Moreland Commission to the Governor of New York. The record of financial chicanery here disclosed should be enough to keep anyone who had been connected, however remotely, with State Title and Mortgage from aspiring to the office of prosecutor of the securities laws.

Mr. Hardy's connection was not remote. He was an incorporator, director, and counsel for State Title, in addition to being chairman of the executive committee. He was officially connected with the company at a time when it engaged in the standard bad practices of the mortgage-certificate business—when it swapped bad mortgages for good in the portfolios backing certificate issues, when it sold certificates after its guaranty fund was impaired, when it routed loans among affiliates and subsidiaries in complicated transactions harshly criticized by the Moreland Commission. In connection with such loans Mr. Hardy and twenty-one other directors of State Title were sued by the state Insurance Department for $5,000,000, and the loans were characterized in that suit as "unsafe, unsound, and unlawful." If Mr. Hardy, as a prime mover in the company and as chairman of the executive committee, knew of these practices, there is no question of his lack of fitness for the post of United States Attorney. And if he did not know as chairman of the executive committee, how much would he be likely to find out about such matters as public prosecutor? Mr. Hardy tries to dodge by declaring weakly that no prosecutor has pinned anything on him. Three prominent officials of the New York Title and Mortgage Company, officially adjudged innocent last week after a Tammany prosecution, might raise a somewhat similar defense. That would hardly make them fit United States attorneys. The skill of the prosecution is no measure of the work done by the mortgage companies.

Attorney General Homer Cummings chooses to defend Mr. Hardy against any charge of "moral turpitude." That means that the New Deal intends to stand behind this preposterous appointment. And that means that the welfare of the investor, so capably upheld in New Deal speeches, is to be subordinated to the Administration's effort to win control of Tammany before the election. The Administration has reason to believe that Mr. Hardy and his coappointee, United States Marshal John J. Kelly, will throw their patronage in the direction of its own bloc within Tammany, and that thereby the hand of "Jimmy" Hines, overlord of Harlem, and other New Dealers will be strengthened against the present Dooling leadership. This is politics, and if it involves placing in charge of securities prosecution a man whose past associations render him peculiarly unfit for such work, that is a sacrifice the Administration is prepared to make. The question is: May it not turn out to be rather shortsighted politics after all? Three hundred thousand New York investors and their families and friends are in no mood to accept the elevation of Mr. Hardy tamely. Indeed, it looks as if the Administration can be saved from a major error only by the efforts of its opponents, those Senators disloyal enough to fight the Hardy confirmation to the end.

Orphaned Silver

A VERITABLE panic was created in the world's silver markets on December 10 when the United States suddenly discontinued its purchases. The alarm subsided somewhat upon Secretary Morgenthau's announcement that silver buying would be resumed, though it would not be carried on predominantly, as heretofore, in London. But despite this reassurance, it is evident that the Administration is being forced to reconsider its entire silver policy. Purchases during the past few days have been insignificant compared to the enormous amounts which the government has acquired in recent weeks, and although on previous occasions the Treasury has stepped in to avert a collapse in the market, it now seems indifferent to sagging prices.

One does not need to look far to discover why the Administration has suddenly tired of its role of Santa Claus to silver producers and speculators throughout the world. China, which was supposed to be one of the chief beneficiaries of our silver-purchasing program, suffered so severely from the deflationary effect of rising silver prices that it was forced, early in November, to abandon the silver standard. While it will be impossible to change the habits of the Chinese people overnight, this action carries with it the prospect that China may ultimately dump billions of ounces of the metal on the markets of the world. A threat by Nanking to sell the

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200,000,000 ounces which it obtained by the recent nationalization decree is said to be the immediate cause of the Treasury's cessation of buying. With China's huge stocks overhanging the market, not even the Treasury's recent purchases of 20,000,000 ounces a week would support prices.

It is much easier to indicate why the buying program was suddenly brought to a standstill than to give a logical explanation of the theory behind the "do-something-for-silver" legislation. Silver production is among the least important of American industries, the average annual output from 1931 to 1933 amounting to only about $8,000,000. It is true that the silver lobby was well organized and carried on an extraordinarily effective propaganda campaign. But despite the good fortune that scattered silver ore through six states and gave the silver interests control over twelve Senators, the propaganda could scarcely have been effective if it had not been for the average American's appalling naivete on monetary matters. Great stress was laid, for instance, on the alleged benefits to trade which would result from "raising the purchasing power of the hundreds of millions of persons who live in the East." These benefits were supposed in some occult way to extend not only to trade with China, which was on a silver standard, but also to trade with India and Japan—presumably because they once had utilized silver as a monetary base. Actually, of course, the reverse has been true: our exports to China in the first eight months of 1935 were only 50 per cent as large as in the same period of 1934. Another argument, used in committee rooms and lobbies but avoided in public, was the tremendous sum which the United States could make by cornering the world's silver market. It was pointed out that the total amount of silver in the world, about 15,000,000,000 ounces, was approximately twenty-five times the aggregate amount of gold, 600,000,000 ounces, but that the price of gold per ounce was nearly fifty times that of silver. The United States was powerful enough, it was contended, to bring silver back at least to the same relative value as gold. And in the process all the silver bought at less than $1.40 an ounce would be just so much profit for Uncle Sam. The abandonment of silver in China completely wrecked this little dream. Deprived of its monetary significance, silver may easily decline even lower than in 1933. The greed of the silver producer for uneconomic profits may lead to the complete bankruptcy of the industry.

In a sense, however, our silver policy is but a by-product of our anachronistic commercial policy. As a creditor nation we must make some provision for our debtors to meet their obligations to us. We are insistent that payment shall not be in goods or services; on the contrary, we continue to maintain a "favorable" balance of trade, thus increasing the payments which must be made to this country. Since 1930 we have refused to extend substantial loans to cover the payments due us. This leaves us with no alternative but to accept huge quantities of gold and silver, which though useless to us impose an overwhelming burden on the world's monetary structure. Meanwhile, our lust for gold has practically upset our silver policy. A year and a half ago it was estimated that we should need to acquire only about 1,500,000,000 ounces of silver in order to attain the one-to-three ratio prescribed by the silver-purchase act. Thus far we have acquired 762,000,000 ounces, but meanwhile more than $2,000,000,000 of gold has been imported, leaving the Treasury farther from its goal that it was eighteen months ago. No wonder the Administration has begun to doubt the efficacy of its program.

Masaryk Retires

THOMAS GARRIGUE MASARYK, son of a coachman and former apprentice to a locksmith and a blacksmith, has voluntarily laid down the high office of President of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic because of the years that rest upon him—he will be eighty-six next March. The constitution of his state declares that only the first President may be reelected more than once, something that has happened every seven years since 1918, a deserved tribute to one who should go down in history as the George Washington of his country. Thanks to him, that country is the soundest and stablest of the nations created as a result of the World War; his retirement will undoubtedly add to the difficulties which it now faces. The conflict of nationalities within Czecho-Slovakia has long been grave, and now a Nazi party has arisen which is greatly aided by incessant Nazi broadcasts from Berlin—for Hitler will never lose sight of the 3,125,000 Germans included within Czecho-Slovakia. But whatever happens in the future, Masaryk's own record is safe. He has shown himself to be a true democrat and a genuine statesman. He has made a minimum of mistakes, though he could not, of course, satisfy all the divergent elements in the national life. Thanks to the fact that the Cabinet is appointed by the President, though subject to a vote of non-confidence by the Chamber of Deputies, Czecho-Slovakia has had a remarkably stable regime since 1918; it has especially profited by Eduard Benes's continuous and brilliant service as Foreign Minister. It is Benes whom Masaryk has strongly recommended to succeed him. Meanwhile Prime Minister Hodza will be acting President until the National Assembly chooses a successor.

For Americans Masaryk has always held a special interest. He married an American, and imbibed here the democratic principles which have always actuated him. Indeed, his country was the only one of the post-war states to pattern its government structure partly after our own, even to the extent of having a special administrative high court to sit in cases of conflict between the central authorities and the local provincial governments. If the country was fortunate in having within its borders 80 per cent of the industries and manufacturing establishments of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, that, on the other hand, has helped to keep alive the antagonism of what is left of Hungary and Austria. But President Masaryk's knowledge of the American federal system and his determination to keep the peace if it was humanly possible to do so have successfully steered the young republic through its first seventeen years.

In his personal bearing and mode of life President Masaryk has been the Jeffersonian democrat. He has lived simply and unostentatiously and has been readily accessible. Power has not gone to his head. Nor has he found it necessary to surround himself with uniformed high functionaries in order to impress himself and his dignity upon the onlookers. His interest in the welfare of the working classes has never flagged, and it is interesting, in view of the bitter attacks upon Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal, to note that Czecho-Slovakia has an eight-hour day, national insurance for health and accident, and old-age pensions. All in all Czecho-Slovakia has been fortunate indeed to have had a Masaryk as its chief founder and first ruler.

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Issues and Men

The Roosevelt Strategy Fails

THE declaration of war upon the New Deal by the National Association of Manufacturers and their announced determination to go into politics to defeat the Roosevelt program, the united attack of the public utilities upon the utility holding-company law, and the obvious efforts of big business to assail new legislation in the courts on every front constitute a sinister and alarming development in our political life. For here we have the making of a grave class war. These forces insist that their views as to our national policies shall prevail; that Congress shall legislate exactly as they wish and above all else refuse to "truckle to labor" any further. Spoiled by their ability to dictate tariffs through generations, and to buy elections in order to do so, the manufacturers are determined again to impose their will. They are going to tell the country how much social and political progress there shall be, and themselves fix the taxes they will pay. Woodrow Wilson called the great capitalists "the masters of America." If they win in this new-old conflict they will more than ever dominate our political and economic life, and the New Deal will have been largely without avail.

All of this only proves the complete breakdown of Mr. Roosevelt's political strategy. He started out to be good fellow with everybody. He imitated Theodore Roosevelt in playing up to both sides, right and left. When he had so stirred the animals on the right that they began to snarl at him viciously he threw them a bone or promised them a breathing spell before he poked them again. Labor and the liberals he treated similarly, promising them great things, like a "Magna Charta for labor" in Section 7-a of the NIRA, and then failing to carry out his promises. They were to have social security—and received barely a quarter of the loaf. It was always a policy of balancing, of playing up one side and then the other—three steps forward and two backward, and then three steps backward and two forward. The result has been precisely what was to have been foreseen. He has pleased neither side and is now falling between two stools. It was absurd from the first to believe that he could ever hold big business in line once it got over its monumental fright at the closing of the banks. As long as he showed any tendency toward reform he should have counted on its hostility. This he intensified—as he confused his liberal supporters—by his refusal to state his objectives.

The result is that he whose picture used to be applauded with unanimity wherever shown is now in many places hissed when it appears. A year ago, after his unprecedented success in the mid-term Congressional elections, his prestige and power were at their height. That was the time for him to have acted—vigorously and greatly. There was the opportunity for genuine leadership, not merely to consolidate his gains, but to put his program well beyond successful attack. He should have dismissed Farley, ceased all political maneuvering, and given up all thought of reelection—which would have taken care of itself. He should have put every office that he could under the civil service, and should have demanded additional legislation along that line. He should have stated clearly the objectives he had determined to set for himself and have called upon all the progressive forces in the country to stand by him. No legislation should have been submitted to Congress by the Executive until it was well and carefully drawn. He should have put all his strength into improving the character and efficiency of his Administration, so that the country would have felt that the housing program, for example, was advancing with proper speed. He could have cut $500,000,000 out of the army and navy budget and still given those avaricious branches of the government half a billion dollars. He could and should have stabilized the dollar.

In other words, he should not only have eschewed politics and set his administrative house in order; he should have nailed his flag to the mast and let everyone know where he stood. Instead, we had often a half-baked legislative program hastily thrown together, like his soak-the-rich tax program, which I still feel never would have seen the light if Huey Long had died a few months earlier; and the Guffey coal bill, which Congress was asked to rush through without regard to its constitutionality. Instead, we have had an Administration lacking coordination, careful direction, fixed aims. Instead, complete silence on the gravely multiplying violations of personal liberty, the increasing terrorization of labor in many sections of the country, the horrible plight of the share-croppers in the South and Southwest, the ominous growth of bitterness and violence in labor troubles, notably in California. Instead, calm assertions, as when the President landed in Charleston, South Carolina, on his return from his cruise, that the depression has been brought to an end—precisely as he had foretold and the New Deal had ordained. Instead, the effort to transfer 3,500,000 men on relief to work jobs, the deceptive announcement that all employables were taken care of when, as the American Federation of Labor reports, there were 11,500,000 unemployed in October, and the cruel turning back of the forgotten millions to communities utterly unable to care for them. All of this accompanied by steady loss of prestige except among farmers and workers, who hope that he will yet prove their Moses.

All in all it is a most disheartening spectacle of a gay, self-sure politician completely overreaching himself, with the result that reaction is united in opposition as never before; that the specter of serious civil dissension seems close at hand. If the country is today seeing the rout of liberal forces, if it is true that, as Secretary Ickes—but not the President—has declared, we are witnessing the rise of fascism in this country, then the responsibility lies squarely at Mr. Roosevelt's door. The strategy of facing both ways has collapsed.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Who Said That Everybody Loves Santa Claus?

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Arms Over Europe

II. The Tragedy of France

By LOUIS FISCHER

Paris, December 3

FRANCE sees the world through a German prism. From the very beginning it has looked at the Italo-Ethiopian dispute through the same medium. The fate of some Abyssinian territory makes little difference to French Somaliland or to the French colonies in North Africa. But the European constellation which will result from the conflict between England and Italy is a life-and-death matter to every man, woman, and child in France.

France asks to be left alone. It is a tired and sated country. It is neither economically enterprising nor politically ambitious. From the first World War France gained as much as it can hope to retain. Moreover, it sees no sense in fighting Germany again, for if 1914-18 did not solve the Franco-German problem, what, short of the complete dismemberment and impoverishment of Germany, will?

In 1870 Germany defeated France and took away Alsace-Lorraine. In 1918 France defeated Germany and took back Alsace-Lorraine. Now what? Germany is strong again. Another war? No Frenchman wants it. It would be insane and unprofitable. But to abhor war is not to prevent war. The present social system is tinkering with a technique of war prevention. The perfected instrument, however, has not yet been devised. Witness the fighting in Africa. The dread of war therefore haunts tens of millions of persons in the towns and hamlets of the crazy continent which is Europe.

King George V prorogued the British Parliament in October, 1935. Before the dissolution, the House of Commons was given an eagerly sought opportunity to debate the Ethiopian question. The world listened. Stanley Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, and Anthony Eden made important statements on British policy with respect to Italy and Ethiopia. But Winston Churchill, in office or out one of England's farthest-seeing statesmen, devoted his entire speech to Germany.

> Germany [he said] is already well on her way to becoming incomparably the most heavily armed nation in the world and the nation most completely ready for war. This is the dominant factor which dwarfs all others and is affecting the movement of politics and diplomacy in every country in Europe. . . . In the shadow of German rearmament other dangers have taken shape on the Continent, for instance, the war between Italy and Abyssinia. This is a small matter compared with the dangers [from Germany] which I have just described.

This is the crux of the European situation put succinctly by one of England's ablest orators. Though at times the spotlight may shine elsewhere, the German problem dwarfs all others. Throughout Europe, war is parlor talk, railway talk, lunch and dinner talk. But it is always Germany that is the main theme of these conversations. Italy is a secondary consideration. Germany has frightened all of Europe. The army, military psychology, and rearmament orders to industry are the dominating factors in the present life of Germany. A marvelous country, well organized and technically very advanced, with a big, virile, and able population is concentrating its energy on military preparations. Terrified by a powerful potential enemy, the potential victims of an attack have one choice: they can make terms with the presumptive aggressor or they can join forces against him. This is what all the diplomatic negotiations, pacts, notes, speeches, conferences, and resolutions in Europe are about.

France, England, and several other powers are impaled on the horns of the same dilemma: shall they encircle and isolate Germany or shall they befriend Germany? Which policy offers the better guaranty of national safety? The European situation is uncertain and dangerous because the governments cannot make up their minds. The governments cannot make up their minds because every decision is dangerous and none would be wholly satisfactory. There are many Frenchmen, notably M. Pierre Laval, who favor an understanding with Hitler. If you have an enemy, Laval says, make peace with him. If the Germans can bomb London, say some Britishers, make peace with them. But what seems simple in logic is extremely complicated in international politics.

Every French Cabinet will have to reckon with the widespread desire for a settlement with Germany. In effecting such a rapprochement, however, Laval and his successors must encounter serious obstacles. To France the German is still the *Boche*. He is a devil to whom fascism has lent a longer sword and a better suit of armor. There are other considerations. Parts of the left People's Front fear that friendship with Hitler will foster French fascism and alienate France's allies. The military warn that a Franco-German understanding might weaken the popular will to arm and thus leave France unprepared for the coming struggle. To this the big armament makers add a fervent amen.

Moreover, it takes two to conclude a bargain, and Laval's personal emissaries to Hitler have not always met with a cordial reception. For France can offer Germany little. A promise of non-aggression is worthless; Berlin knows that France will not attack. French guaranties of German frontiers are therefore equally superfluous. If Germany wants a loan it is more likely to apply to London than to Paris, and any redistribution of colonies or mandates—whose?—also lies chiefly with the British. Yet, apart from vague and probably impracticable schemes for industrial collaboration and tariff reductions, these are all the gifts which the French bag contains. Great Britain, besides, is not entertained by the idea of a bipartite Franco-German settlement. For one thing, it would grant France too much freedom to side with Italy. And Hitler, who prefers

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Britain's help because Britain has more to give, accordingly reacts but feebly to French flirtations.

The German attitude would quickly change if France complied with one request which Hitler and his subordinates have repeatedly made—if France would scrap its new treaty with the Soviet Union. Hitler argues that it is directed against Germany. It would be so used if Germany took the offensive. It is a pact of mutual assistance, and Germany and Poland have been invited to join. Joining would assure the Germans of French, Russian, and Czech aid if they were attacked. But they have not joined. They may be acting wisely; perhaps they are convinced that they will never be attacked. At the same time German statesmen have striven to rob the pact of its significance. And Laval has never discouraged them. Before he went to Moscow in May, 1935, while he was in Moscow, and since then, he has often stated that for him the Franco-Soviet treaty would be the preliminary to serious negotiations with Berlin. In fact, it would facilitate them. Without it, he might be accused of selling out France. With it, he can assert that having made another friend he can talk more firmly to the enemy.

Actually, however, Laval's coquetting with Hitler has clouded the Franco-Soviet horizon. The treaty was signed on May 2, 1935. According to the French constitution it could have been ratified immediately by presidential decree. Instead, Laval postponed ratification and finally put it up to the Chamber of Deputies, thereby making the whole question of Franco-Soviet relations a political football. The long interval of non-ratification has, much to the pleasure of the French and German fascists, spoiled the honeymoon atmosphere in which the treaty was originally concluded. Then it was styled "an alliance." But such documents are never promissory notes. They are blank checks, and everything depends on the content with which they are invested. This document has been given no content as yet. M. Laval is rumored to have told Prince Paul of Yugoslavia that it would remain a dead letter. The fact that it was made a subject of private diplomatic talks with the Nazis disturbed the Bolsheviks and diminished the trust which they had at first reposed in it. Laval, in other words, has succeeded in chilling the Russians without winning the Germans. This is characteristic of the impasse of French foreign policy. Vacillating between the encirclement of Germany and reconciliation with Germany, the Quai d'Orsay fails in both purposes.

The same indecision plagues France in the East African dispute. Since France has little direct concern with what happens to Ethiopia, the object of the French government in the Anglo-Italian crisis has been to keep the good-will of both parties. They can both be useful in checking Germany. When Germany is weak, Franco-Italian friendship is not indispensable. Indeed, the antagonism between Italy and Yugoslavia, France's ally, makes it difficult. So do Italy's expansionist designs in the Balkans. But these problems are submerged the moment a resurgent Germany threatens Austria and France. The territorial integrity of Austria, a paramount interest to France and Italy alike, then becomes the bridge uniting Paris with Rome.

In January, 1935, accordingly, Laval went to see Mussolini. That meeting marks a turning-point in recent European diplomatic history. Only the Duce and Laval know the whole truth, and they are not likely to reveal it. But some of the facts are known. They agreed that France could withdraw its guards, estimated at 200,000 men, from the Franco-Italian border and use them, if it liked, in northern France, the zone of a possible German invasion. Since this Franco-Italian compact was predicated on a complementary understanding between Yugoslavia and Italy, the safe assumption is that the Italian troops thus liberated from the Italo-French frontier were not to be transferred to the northeastern corner of Italy but much farther away, perhaps to East Africa. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that Laval, in his Rome negotiations, presented Mussolini with 2,500 shares of the French railway which runs from Djibouti to Addis Ababa and with two strips of territory, one adjoining South Libya, the other adjoining Eritrea. He likewise renounced in writing the rights in Abyssinia granted to France by the Anglo-French-Italian spheres-of-influence treaty of December 13, 1906. At the same time the prolonged and painful quarrel between France and Italy over Tunis was adjusted—more relief for Mussolini in Africa and the Mediterranean. In many ways the invasion of Ethiopia, whether the French wanted it or not, is France's baby.

From the point of view of Franco-Italian relations, the Mussolini-Laval arrangement was desirable and wise. But the Chinese puzzle of European politics does not always yield to common-sense treatment. If the pieces are nicely fitted together in one part, those in another section may become a hopeless jumble. When the trouble over Ethiopia started, Laval naturally endeavored to continue the policy of Franco-Italian friendship. After all, Italy was merely grabbing some worthless African land. They had all done that before. England, occasionally for anti-French purposes, had cooperated with Italy in naval matters. Surely England would not mind some cooperation with Italy now on the part of France.

So matters stood while Great Britain wavered about Italy and Ethiopia. In May, 1935, London became disturbed. In June it resolved on action. To help clear the decks it signed the Anglo-German naval agreement of June 18, 1935. That came as a shock to Paris. Perfidious Albion again? On February 3, in London, England and France had agreed to work intimately together for the pacification of Europe, especially as far as Germany was concerned. In the second week of April, at Stresa, these two powers had dealt in concert with German questions. And then, behind the back of France, as Paris claimed, Great Britain precipitately signed a naval agreement with Germany which was definitely detrimental to French interests in that it threatened to place France at a disadvantage on the sea vis-a-vis Germany.

All this was no inducement to France to collaborate with England in Ethiopian matters. But England needed such collaboration and therefore insisted on it. Suppose British battleships, pressed by the Italian fleet, required shelter in French Mediterranean harbors. Would the French admit them? The League of Nations was unlikely to decide on sanctions if France opposed them. The French hesitated. How will you behave, Laval asked in effect, if we are attacked by Germany? Sir Samuel Hoare did not know; it depended on the circumstances; there must be

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"elasticity." France did not like that. England, nevertheless, applied so much pressure in Paris that Laval was forced to approve economic sanctions. In the third week of October, just before the final League decision, when the French government showed its teeth for a moment and objected strenuously to an embargo on Italian exports, the Anglo-French situation was near the breaking-point. Notes flew thick and fast. France, fearing a rupture with London, bowed to British dictation.

The British complain that French tactics delayed the application of sanctions and encouraged Mussolini to trust in concessions from the League or in a transaction behind its back. Although French officials assure one that France will loyally fulfil its sanctions obligations, Paris newspapers and numerous business men continue to agitate against sanctions, and privately there is a suspicion that smuggling is not precluded. At French insistence, moreover, almost perpetual conversations go on, with a view, ostensibly, to a settlement of the Ethiopian war. It is stated, however, that the British participate in these conferences of experts to prevent the French from offering terms to Rome which might be unpalatable to London.

The British resent the French attitude. But their resentment is mild compared to that of the French. England has violently jerked France away from Italy. Paris feels that it is losing its independence in foreign affairs. If compelled to choose between Britain and Italy, France must of course prefer Britain. Britain could be of more assistance against Germany. But the French rested, for a time, under the illusion that they could keep on good terms with both Rome and London, just as they still suppose that they can play with Moscow and flirt with Berlin. The tragedy of France is that in refusing to choose one of two possibilities it risks losing both of them. The Bolsheviks are displeased by French advances to the Nazis, but a Franco-German rapprochement is as far away as ever. French collaboration with England in sanctions embitters Italy, but at the same time French hesitancy has not inspired any too kindly feelings in Britain.

It will be argued that France's irresoluteness and its baneful results are inevitable in the present state of French internal politics, with an unstable government and passionate hostility between right and left. This is indubitably a factor. But the divergent ideas on French foreign policy cut across class and party lines. It is not only Laval who seeks an accommodation with Germany. Daladier, an outstanding figure in the left People's Front, also favors it. Nor would the Socialists always veto overtures to Germany, for the Frenchman in the street demands that no peace possibilities remain untried. Similarly, many reactionaries want an alliance with Russia. In that curious split personality called the *Echo de Paris* André Geraud ("Pertinax") every morning advocates warm contacts with Moscow, while in a neighboring column Henri de Kerillis rails against them and charges that Stalin has bought the People's Front and is interfering in French home affairs. The general staff, which desires contacts with the Red Army, wonders, nevertheless, whether a military alliance might not anger Germany, wonders too whether Russia will join when war comes.

Mussolini is popular with the Croix de Feu, but millions of anti-fascists also want good relations with Italy even at the risk of ruffling Britain, for they are convinced that if France were attacked by Germany England would have to come to the rescue. It is general French belief that Great Britain could not afford to allow Germany to take the Channel ports or to crush France and then dominate the Continent. There is cogency in this opinion. Yet it is well to remember that England did not stop Germany from occupying Paris in 1870. Moreover, real Anglo-French friendship might prevent a war, while ultimate English assistance, rendered after hostilities had commenced, could only prevent a defeat. In any event, it remains true that France's pro-Italian stand can best be understood in the light of this faith in England's necessary obligation to save France. Any government, therefore, will probably seesaw between London and Rome as long as it can. Any government of this year or next will waver between Germany and Russia. The rest is a matter of important nuances but not of essentials. As a member of the Chamber of Deputies said to me a month ago at the annual congress of the Radical Socialist Party in the Salle Wagram, "Laval's foreign policy under Radical pressure is more like what the Radicals would like French foreign policy to be than the policy of a Radical Cabinet might be under right pressure." This is why the People's Front hesitates to overthrow Laval on the foreign-affairs issue.

If the left begins to identify the war danger with foreign fascisms and if the right is completely converted to De Kerillis, the cleavage on foreign policy may follow closely the division on domestic problems. This is possible if French internal politics continues to polarize. Fundamentally, however, the sad impotence or negative influence of France in European matters springs from its difficult position. Its *comme ci, comme çà* attitude is a product of circumstances. When Germany is strong, France needs friends and dare not have enemies. Accordingly, if Britain takes a determined stand, France follows. But if Cerruti, the Italian ambassador here, thunders that petroleum sanctions will mean war, Laval shrinks.

The prospect is that France will hereafter side with England more often than with any other power. Its loyalty to the League of Nations, which has been questioned since the Ethiopian crisis began, must be reasserted in practice. Trusting in these two sources of support and in augmented armaments, France might conceivably withdraw farther into its shell and reconcile itself to a secondary role in world affairs. After all, Holland too is an empire and a rich country; yet there is a tacit understanding that Great Britain will protect the Netherlands and their colonies in case of need. Already occasional French voices dilate on the advantages of becoming a second Spain or Portugal. No great power, to be sure, resigns its rank speedily. Russia, Poland, and the Little Entente will not be dropped in a hurry if at all. But France may attach less importance to their collaboration and shift the emphasis of its foreign policy to London and Geneva. This much is certain: the France which dominated Europe between 1918 and 1934 is no more. It is Germany's gain.

[*This is the second of a series of articles by Louis Fischer surveying the present international crisis from various European capitals. The third will appear in the issue of January 8.*]

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Fascism Looms in Mexico

By L. O. PRENDERGAST

Mexico City, December 2

THE anniversaries of two revolutions and a lecture series are the improbable agents that are rapidly provoking a new political crisis in the Mexican government. The honeymoon period succeeding the overthrow of Calles last June is nearing its end. Not that these six months have been all sweetness and light for President Cárdenas. The government's consolidation of its power throughout the country, a problem that involved ousting the Calles governors of the individual states and exterminating the foci of Callista infection wherever they were to be found, has not been easy. But in that campaign the forces which joined to eliminate Calles have at least worked together in self-defense. Now that other issues must be faced, the essentially divided nature of the administration is glaringly revealed. Superficially a "left" government if viewed in the light of its ruthless campaign against the Callista reaction, it is actually composed of left and right elements. It is attempting to face both ways at once, to satisfy the claims and allay the fears of all social classes, and above all to maintain itself in power by any and all means. No social theory or program held in common brought its elements together; their only political bonds were hostility to Calles and the thirst for office and privileges endemic among Mexican politicians.

The old schism within the P. N. R. (Partido Nacional Revolucionario) which provoked the Calles break has not been healed; it has merely been carried over to the new ruling group. In essence it is a quarrel over the methods by which rule is to be maintained, with the so-called left wing favoring the traditional crimson coloring of official Mexican demagogy and the right wing drifting steadily in the direction of open reaction. In the present governmental set-up General Francisco Múgica, Minister of Communications, and González Vásquez Vela, Minister of Education, represent the left wing; General Saturnino Cedillo, Minister of Agriculture, and Emilio Portes Gil, president of the P. N. R. and the man generally credited with having engineered the coup against Calles, are the chief leaders of the right wing. President Lázaro Cárdenas is the bridge between the groups.

The rock on which the existing coalition may split has made its appearance in the past few weeks, and the public controversy which recent events have raised may easily lead to a new government shake-up and Cabinet reshuffling. It has ended for the moment in a pitched battle between members of the working class, fighting under the banner of the Committee for Proletarian Defense (the executive body of the United Front), and the Camisas Doradas (Gold Shirts), an openly fascist body formerly maintained by ex-President Abelardo Rodríguez and Aarón Sáenz, ex-Governor of the Federal District, both of whom were shorn of political power and influence by the ousting of Calles. Their organization, however, found new backers, and the direct line leading from the Dorados into the present administration is the trail of dynamite that may blow up the deceptive façade of government harmony.

A brief review of the developments of the past few weeks is essential for a proper understanding of the fierce tension which has suddenly gripped Mexico City. On October 20 Vicente Lombardo Toledano, leader of the Confederación General de Obreros y Campesinos de México, returned to Mexico from a three months' study tour of the Soviet Union, where he had been the invited guest of the Russian trade unions. The C. G. O. C. is the largest, best organized, and most influential of the various Mexican labor and peasant groupings. It is the heir of the old C. R. O. M. (Confederación Regional de Obreros Mexicanos) once led by the redoubtable Morones, political ally of Calles and the most corrupt labor leader Mexico has ever known. When Lombardo split with Morones in 1932 he took the larger part of the organization with him, and while Morones still leads the remnants of the C. R. O. M., the C. G. O. C. today comprises fully half the organized workers and peasants of the country.

The united front formed spontaneously at the height of the Calles crisis last June has endured, and it has marked the end, even if as yet only on the surface, of the bitter rivalries and enmities within the labor movement. For months before, the Communist Party, without making much apparent headway, had been proposing the formation of a united front. Its swift realization in a moment of crisis was largely due to this persistent campaign. Since then, the resolutions of the Comintern Congress, the threatening war situation, Fascist Italy's aggression in Ethiopia—keenly felt here, as Mexican labor knows only too well the weight of imperialism—have served to strengthen the bonds of unity, and the recriminations which formerly kept Mexican labor hopelessly divided have largely disappeared. Moreover, when the united front was formed last June it was based on class consciousness, all the constituent organizations pledging themselves to a nation-wide general strike in the event of any fascist attack on the rights of the working class.

Immediately upon his return Lombardo announced a series of lectures on the Soviet Union to be given by himself and Victor Manuel Villaseñor, a brilliant young lawyer and Marxist who had accompanied him on his trip. A scurrilous campaign against him was begun at once in the press. Obviously the nefarious Bolsheviks had led him by the nose; he had been shown only what they had wanted him to see, and the true state of affairs in that unhappy country had been concealed from him; he had been hedged about by guides who were spies, by interpreters who were secret agents of the O. G. P. U. (the news that the O. G. P. U. no longer exists has reached very few ears in Mexico); his Communist sympathies (as a matter of fact, Lombardo had been the target for merciless attacks by the Communist Party almost up to the moment of the June united front) were well known, and of course he had found only what he had looked for.

On November 7 the anniversary of the Russian Revolution was for the first time formally celebrated by Mexican labor in a meeting at which Lombardo and Hernán Laborde, secretary of the Communist Party, spoke from the same plat-

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form, also for the first time. On November 11 Lombardo delivered his first lecture in the theater of the Ministry of Education. The newspapers the next day redoubled their attacks. The lecture was maliciously garbled in the published accounts, and the experts of *Universal* and *Excelsior,* the two leading dailies of the city, produced sheafs of quotations from their favorite authorities on the Soviet Union—Panait Istrati, Tatiana Tchernavina, W. E. Knickerbocker, "Believe-It-or-Not" Ripley, and the ineffable Walker, Hearst's star Russian correspondent—to refute it. The most transparent and vicious lies of the Hearst press were shamelessly repeated, while middle-class and conservative Mexico City nodded its collective head sagely before the testimony of these unimpeachable witnesses.

Nevertheless, the lectures continued before packed audiences, and the tension grew. In practically all social circles the only topic of discussion was Lombardo and the Soviet Union. It is perhaps difficult for anyone unfamiliar with the appalling provincialism of Mexico City to believe that a mere series of expository talks, laden with graphs and statistics, on the economic progress of the Soviet Union in the last few years could produce a state bordering on public hysteria, but that is precisely what happened. And in this atmosphere of mounting neurasthenia, the anniversary of another revolution approached, the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

In the preliminary celebrations on November 17 a parade of sports organizations was held in which many luckless government employees who would not know a soccer ball from a tennis ball were required to march to swell the ranks of Mexico's "revolutionary" athletes. In the line of march the Camisas Doradas, uniformed, disciplined, armed, had a prominent position. Their participation in a parade under government auspices aroused great indignation in labor circles. Who was their backer? Their former subsidizers in the government had fled with Calles. Obviously, the organization had found a new angel who was in a position to grant it official favor and protection. And then it was announced that in the parade of Veterans of the Revolution to be held on November 20 the Dorados would again take part.

The labor organizations issued a call to their members to prevent the fascists from marching, by force if necessary. Needless to say, official permission, from a government which nominally bases itself on the masses of workers and peasants, to an openly fascist body to take part in a celebration of the very revolution from which this same government claims to derive its moral authority and prestige was at best a stupid blunder. The main guilt for the tragic consequences must be laid directly at the door of the administration. Warning was duly given by the labor unions that they would oppose the Gold Shirt demonstration by every means. In this supercharged atmosphere the twentieth of November dawned and the stage was set.

Shortly before noon the Dorados mobilized in the National Stadium, where they swore an oath of allegiance to the flag and passed out shirts to the hundreds of innocent recruits hastily hired for the day to increase their numbers. Then, in a semi-military column, variously estimated at from two to three thousand, they began their march through the city, with mounted and armed contingents at the head, "infantry" making up the bulk of the column, and a rear guard of another detachment of cavalry. Through bad organization and a mistaken fear that the Dorados would attempt to attack the locals of the trade unions, most of the workers' squadrons had been held on guard at their own union offices. As a result the march of the Gold Shirts' column was practically unopposed until it reached the Zócalo, or central plaza, at about two o'clock.

There the revolutionary veterans, various workers' and peasants' organizations, and the Socorro Rojo (the Mexican section of the International Red Aid) had been holding a meeting since noon. The President's private secretary, Luis Rodríguez, had been reviewing the demonstration from the main balcony of the palace. Orator after orator had appealed to him, as the government's representative, to dissolve the Gold Shirts and to disband their parade before they reached the Zócalo. Rodríguez compromised at last by sending word to the Dorado leader General Nicolás Rodríguez, not to lead his forces past the palace itself, but to debouch through one side of the plaza and so into the side streets behind the palace. It was a compromise that could not possibly prevent the impending collision.

As the Dorados swept into the Zócalo, a tremendous shout of protest rose from the crowds massed in the demonstration. No one can say exactly how the fighting began, but within a few minutes the mounted Dorados, shouting "Death to Jews and Communists," were charging into the packed onlookers, among them many women and children, firing their revolvers, and striking and cutting with knives and machetes. Taxi-drivers drove their cars against the horses, and as the newspapers here reported the engagement, it really seemed like a battle between tanks and cavalry. The workers, for the most part unarmed, defended themselves with clubs torn from the reviewing stands, stones, and bottles. After half an hour of fierce fighting the police succeeded in clearing the plaza. Casualties so far reported are five dead and fifty-odd wounded, among the latter General Rodríguez, the Dorado leader, who was stabbed in the abdomen.

Today as in the crisis of last June the question on every tongue in Mexico City is: What will Cárdenas do? In view of the government's repeated expression of its proletarian sympathies, one might expect an outright suppression of the Dorados. But there are difficulties. While the fight was actually between them and organized labor in general, it has been made to seem a battle between fascists and Communists, so that suppression of the fascists would be almost universally interpreted as governmental protection and support of the Communist Party. The problem for Cárdenas is not dissimilar to that which he faced in the Calles crisis six months ago. The Dorados are being supported by the reactionary, anti-labor, and potentially fascist members of his own government. These are the men whose alliance he won in the struggle to oust Calles. They are politically strong, and they have followers among the populace, particularly among the peasants, and in the army. Unrest is on the increase all over Mexico. Sporadic uprisings and rebellions, for the most part engineered by the Catholics—with money sent in by Catholic organizations in the United States—and by Callistas and other reactionaries, continue to break out in Guanajuato, Jalisco, Sonora, and other states, embarrassing the government and keeping the country nervously on edge. There is little public belief in the invincibility of the administration. Only a firmly integrated government composed of politically homogeneous elements and backed by the unswerving loyalty of the masses could deal effectively with such a

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situation. But the Cárdenas government is at cross purposes, and so far the President has not dared risk the break which an open move either to the right or to the left would provoke. To suppress the Gold Shirts would be to affront not only their backers within the government but finance capital and the United States as well, for it would imply support of the Communist Party. Not to suppress them will mean the risk of a country-wide general strike, which the united front, in its protest against the events of the twentieth, has already threatened. If Cárdenas allows the incident to develop to the point of a general strike, it can only mean that he has decided on a showdown, not with the reaction, but with labor, for such a workers' movement could be crushed only by armed force.

But it is extremely unlikely that Cárdenas will allow his hand to be forced. What he is most likely to seek is a compromise formula which will allow him to retain working-class support without splitting his administration wide open and without bringing down on his head the wrath of the White House. Unfortunately, the nature of such a compromise is all too obvious. Suppression of both organizations—the Dorados and the Communist Party—would keep peace in his Cabinet, satisfy the press and middle-class opinion, and alienate only a minority of organized labor. It would have the added advantage of splitting labor's united front without seeming to, of sowing again the seeds of mutual distrust among the various sections of the labor movement, which the united front has nearly uprooted, of preserving labor's support of the government and at the same time eliminating from its ranks the most articulate and critical opponents of the administration's pseudo-socialism. Moreover, such a maneuver would undermine Lombardo's position within his own organization. The C. G. O. C. and the rest of Mexican organized labor are too recent friends of the Communist Party to risk very much in the defense of their new comrades in the face of a determined assault by the government.

Louisiana Skin Game

By CARLETON BEALS and ABEL PLENN

NIGHT is falling over the bayou and marsh region of southern Louisiana. Set between sedgy banks or bordered by gigantic live oaks draped with trailing Spanish moss, the inlets lie like motionless mirrors, here and there faintly yellow from the last rays of the sun. Heavy shadows darken the broad expanse of treacherous coastal marshlands. A pirogue slides across the waters to a clapboard shack. A splash of oars pulled in, a thud against the bank, and the occupant of the crude little boat, a rawboned, leather-complexioned man, staggers ashore under a load of pelts. His rubber hip boots make a slushing sound in the mud as he walks to the shack. From its single window a kerosene lamp gleams dully. Casting down his skins, he pulls off his rubber boots with a grunt. He is clad in overalls and work blouse—almost like a factory hand.

"Not good at h'all, this day, no," he says to his dumpy wife and two young sons. "Yo' see, I pass at Bayou Manshac nex' week. Bot, 'bout cinq minute après fo' I cam 'halong side one li'l lagoon, shap' round lak pond. . . ." So he describes his day's experience before setting to work on his pelts.

This tiny shack is like thousands scattered through the marsh country; this man might be almost any one of 30,000 trappers, the workers in Louisiana's fur empire, mostly descendants of early French and Spanish settlers. Many of them are "Cajuns," descendants of those Acadians who were deported from Nova Scotia in 1735, made famous in the "Evangeline" legend and utilized in romantic literature ever since.

The millions of grass-covered acres of semi-marsh lands give the state the distinction of being the greatest fur-producing commonwealth in the Union. The value of fur pelts from Louisiana is almost as great as the annual budget of Honduras, greater than the value of all the gold and silver mined each year in Alaska, more than double that of all the fruits, vegetables, and grains exported from Cuba. Louisiana produces more pelts than all the rest of the United States, more than Canada and Alaska combined. In an ordinary year—this year production was halved on account of salt-water flooding and a trappers' war—Louisiana sends more than six million pelts, mostly muskrat, to the world market. It is estimated that as many more are bootlegged, with the connivance of crooked officials, to evade taxes.

What does this mean in human terms? The glamor of the trapper's life in frozen regions has filled the pages of fiction, and the trappers of Louisiana still lead a pioneer life, with risks as great as those of their comrades in colder regions. Louisiana has no sub-zero weather and no blizzards, though there have been times when the ice did not thaw for a week; but the trapper and his family are exposed to malaria, typhoid, pernicious anemia, hookworm, tuberculosis, and other dire diseases. And none but the veteran "marsh-walker" can penetrate the fastness of the swamps, bent under a load of 150 steel traps or as many furs, without sinking out of sight in the fluid, often bottomless ooze. The seven million acres of trapping lands stretching brownish gray along the coast contain many spots of *terre tremblante* to engulf the unwary or even occasionally an experienced trapper trudging along his trap line.

By the middle of November the trapper is ready for his arduous work. If he is not working for a company, he has already prepared his "camp," a crazy shack not much more impressive than the pile of mud and branches built by the muskrats. Though he places it on the driest ground possible, the water often rises and floods through it, forcing the family to live ankle deep in water for days at a time. In the shack's interior, sometimes papered with pictures cut from popular magazines, are a short-length wood stove, a lamp, barrels for packing, a cot or two, steel traps, and stretchers. The family diet consists chiefly of salt meat, flour, canned meat, and vegetables. The coffee is dripped "black as a darky's heel, hotter than the hinges of hell, stronger than Arkansas religion." Red beans and rice complete the bill of fare—a rough frontier diet, palatable after dawn-to-dark labor in the marshes. Occasionally instead of building a hut the trapper converts

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a raft into a houseboat for the two and a half or three months of the open season.

On the first legal day he gets up before daybreak, dons his rubber hip boots, and sets out with his traps, bent double under a load which most people could not carry across the street, let alone thread the treacherous swamps with. Here and there in the marsh grass bunches of tall reeds thrust up, the rousseau cane, commonly called "rozo," which serves as a hint to the trapper of the muskrats' haunts. At convenient intervals in the vicinity of the nests he sets out his steel-jawed "Gibbs" two-trigger or his double-spring "Victor."

On the following morning, again up before dawn, he takes a swig of hot coffee, ties a lunch to his belt, and is off. "Ha! zee first rat musque," he cries. The jaws of the trap are pried open, the animal is extricated, the trap reset. When he reaches home long after dark, he and the whole family skin the animals. A knife slash near the tail, a swift jerk by muscular fingers, and the skin comes off over the head like a nightshirt. The skins are then scraped and stretched on steel frames. This gruelling labor lasts for the seventy-five or ninety days of the open season without a break.

In a populous muskrat district boats and huts line the banks as in a Venetian slum. The huts are on stilts; a few, if the soil is good, have tiny gardens; perhaps a pig or two roots in a muddy pen. Down the water lane, wherever the output is not controlled by large companies, come the fur buyers in launches, bringing the day's news from civilization or from other bayous and haggling over the pricing and grading of the furs. The shacks of such a region, the homes of the trappers, are hardly better than the marsh shacks built for a season.

Until about five years ago the condition of the trappers steadily improved. For centuries a queer isolated folk, they were being assimilated into the American scene and the machine age—as a result of post-war expansion—under favorable economic conditions. More houses were being built in the mainland villages. Many trappers who had never before come out of the marshes were visiting New Orleans and other cities in their own cars. Hygiene, schools, better roads, automobiles, telephones, and radios were becoming topics of conversation.

Suddenly however, the whole picture changed. The inhabitants had trapped and hunted and fished in the coastal marshes for generations, as far back as the seventeenth century, but they had never obtained titles or leases for the trapping lands. When the wealth of the fur industry was discovered, the entire vast region began to fall little by little into the hands of various large landowners, and powerful fur companies were formed overnight. Great corporations now hold what was once a public domain, where even privately held portions were freely trapped. Men now trap on shares or for cash rent. Trouble has resulted just as when the cattle companies fenced the Far Western range. Trappers' wars have broken out. Men have been killed. Some have gone to jail. Trapping means no longer a free and easy roaming life but almost an industrialized existence. In these past half-dozen years a sturdy group of American citizens—in the kingdom of the late Huey Long—has been driven into peonage. The story of this drastic change is one of chicanery, corrupt officials and judges, strike-breakers, gunmen, battles, murders, jailings. Today three or four big fur companies have a monopoly of most of the land and have created a situation similar to that existing in the soft-coal industry.

Most contracts between the companies and the trappers stipulate that the trappers' half of the yield shall be sold to the landowners. The companies are thus enabled to name their own prices for furs. In the majority of cases this is much less than the market price, sometimes only a third as large. In addition, the fur appraiser divides the muskrat pelts into four classes according to quality—the price difference is as great as 80 cents—and by generally undergrading pays the trapper on several thousand furs from $100 to $400 less than a just price. On reselling them, the fur company establishes nine categories; so actually the loss to the trapper is even larger.

The monopolization of lands and the importing of outside company men have led not only to hostilities but to a great deal of poaching in season and out. And when this year the fighting and the floods cut the value of the output fully one half, to the lowest point in the past twenty years, Huey Long's henchmen, some of whom have grown wealthy in these fur companies, pushed through the legislature, with his assistance, a trespassing law so drastic that it is possible to arrest any outsider found in the vicinity of company properties. On streams that are obviously public waterways—many others have been fenced off—armed guards trail every boat, and if an outsider puts foot on land he is immediately arrested. The trespassing law has been made an excuse for the arbitrary arrest of members of the trappers' union. Most of the fur-company guards are sworn in as state or federal deputies.

When the NRA spread its blue wings of hope over the land, several independent fur buyers and independent merchants, who could scarcely operate because of the armed guards, helped the trappers to get a code in Washington. Though the trappers' representatives were confronted by a brilliant array of company lawyers, they obtained a fairly liberal code, the chief safeguard being that the trappers henceforth were actually to be paid in kind, not in cash at a company-determined price. It looked as if brighter days were ahead. But the federal "coordinator" did nothing. The same practices continued. We have not been able to find a single instance in which this provision of the NRA code was enforced. The trappers had no money to carry the violations to the courts.

In general, the companies now boycott all local trappers and bring in outsiders, a large percentage of whom are mulattoes, under armed guard. As a result the independent trappers are starving. They try to survive by fishing, shrimping, and oyster hunting during the six months' open season, but their highest return for such work is 50 cents a day. A recent shipment of oysters by one of the local men brought him 23 cents a sack, from which he had to pay commission, transportation, and refrigerating costs. Many a fisherman finds himself in debt after a week's arduous labor. A few cut broom straw at $22 a ton. This requires at least two days to cut, then it must be dried and baled. An unexpected rain ruins it. From the sum received, freight and commission charges are deducted. At Shell Beach we found people literally starving. The local stores are all closing or going bankrupt.

The imported strike-breakers do not derive much benefit from their betrayal of their fellows. They are hired by contract for the season on a fifty-fifty basis and taken out to

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the company camps in company boats, but must pay for the transportation from their catch. They have no boats themselves and cannot escape if there is a flood. Often they live for weeks ankle deep in water. Last year many families were taken off by fishermen after they had been standing on their beds for three days. The company made no effort to rescue them. Three or four families, men, women, and children, are dumped into flimsy shacks about the size of a small hotel room. For the rent of these shared shacks, each trapper must pay $25 or $30 a season. If a man must have a dugout to get to his traps, he is charged $10 or $12 more. Food is brought out by the company, with 10 per cent added for delivery to already inflated prices. Our inquiries revealed that last season a $4.90 sack of sugar was sold to the trappers for $8 plus 10 per cent. Traps worth $2.75 a dozen were sold for $6 a dozen. Steel stretchers worth 80 cents a dozen were sold for $1.80. The company is supposed to provide water, but often forgets, and the people have to use the brackish bayou water to make coffee. We talked with one company trapper who had brought in the unusual number of 4,000 furs, worth at least $2,000 at last season's low prices. By the end of the season he was $90 in debt to the company. A wizard of a trapper cannot clear $100 a year, whereas he used to be able to make several thousand dollars when he was free. Often the trappers have to wait weeks after the season is over before the company boat comes to take them off, and even longer for an accounting.

Such is the vaunted individualism we are asked to protect as a sacred part of American life. When milady puts on her soft fur coat, it is quite possible that it was once stretched out on the side of a shack in the Louisiana marshes by men little better off than the animals they hunt.

Unfit to Print

By ISIDOR FEINSTEIN

EVERY year the New York *Times* runs a Christmas campaign for New York's One Hundred Neediest Cases. It is a most worthy charity. Each of these cases unfolds a world of suffering. The titles sound sentimental. "Alone at Sixty-nine," "Scrubwoman," "Deserted, at Two," "A Heroic Mother," "His Father's 'Eyes,'" "An Old Nurse," "Of No Value," "Please Make My Daddy Well," "Old and Alone," "At Nineteen—Breadwinner for Ten." These captions make the more sophisticated shrink. But the misery behind them is real.

I know the editors of the New York *Times* must read these thumbnail biographies. But I wonder whether they do more. For in the One Hundred Neediest Cases the *Times* each year gives its readers a glimpse of news it did not think fit to print before. During the great taxi strike in New York the *Times* reader heard of violence and hooligans and gangsterism, nothing of the insecurity and poverty that led up to it. But "His Father's 'Eyes'" tells of nine-year-old Bobby who leads his father about. "Mr. N. was a taxicab driver until an optic nerve atrophied in 1933 and he lost his sight. Before then he earned an adequate living for Bobby and his wife, Susan, who is thirty-seven." What does the *Times* consider an "adequate" living? Another of the Neediest gives a clue. He is "suffering from an acute kidney condition and doctors say he has only a few months to live." His "illness came suddenly; he was working until late in September and supporting his family [wife and two children] adequately on his salary of $14 a week as an elevator operator."

The *Times* prints a great deal of news about "chiseling" by the unemployed. I call it "news" out of courtesy. Usually it has flare headlines over vague charges. I do not recall that the *Times* ever commented editorially on the inadequacy of relief in New York City or anywhere else. And if these facts appear in a news story it is likely to be by implication. But "An Old Author" tells of a man seventy-six, now destitute. His wife, "granddaughter of a noted American author, died a short time ago, possibly, doctors think, because she had not had sufficient food for a long time." Has anyone ever heard the *Times* appeal for workmen's compensation in occupational ailments? "Crippled Hands," another of its Neediest Cases, tells an illuminating story. "His hands that used to be so dextrous are swollen and misshapen, for he has spent too many years fitting damp felts over a wooden mold and steaming them into hats; and he has breathed the damp air for so long that he has contracted a deep-seated sinus infection and chronic arthritis."

It must be news to readers of the *Times* to learn that New York State's old-age pensions, larger than those in most states, are only enough to starve along on. "Two Old Stage People" is the story of a disabled couple. "The old couple stretched out their savings until last year, when Mr. M. received his old-age pension of $29 a month. It wasn't enough for two. . . . The agency came to their aid when they were being dispossessed and were selling their furniture to buy food." Nor have *Times* readers ever heard that old-age pensions start too late. "Alone at Sixty-nine" has tried desperately to get work. "But Mrs. B.'s working days are over. Until next year, when she will be eligible for the old-age pension, this kindly old lady must have aid." Readers of the *Times* know that the furriers in New York are a lot of trouble-making reds. "Michael O., who is nineteen, has been warned that he must give up his job as a furrier or he will die. But Michael, with his $9 a week, is the only breadwinner in the O. family, and Michael keeps on working although already he shows definite symptoms of tuberculosis."

The least pearl dropped by the United States Chamber of Commerce or the National Association of Manufacturers is reported on the front page of the *Times*, and its readers know all about the decay of rugged individualism and the exorbitant wage demands of the workers. But in the Hundred Neediest Cases they can learn certain other facts. "When Freda was twelve, she was at work at $15 a week. Today, at nineteen, her $9 wage is the only stable income of a family of ten. . . . The youngsters, from seventeen-year-old Jean to the year-old baby, all are underweight and in need of dental and medical attention." Where else could they get this glimpse of rugged individualism in action? "She was brought up in comfort; her father was a lawyer and she an only child. She married a successful accountant, and her marriage for many years was a happy one. She was expecting her third child about a year ago when her husband —his morale shattered by a series of pay cuts and the daily fear that he would be dismissed—disappeared." The mother

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and new baby are ill. The older children "cannot understand" their changed circumstances. "Their mother sometimes starts to cry when they ask for things she cannot give them."

No American worker, whether laborer or white-collar worker, who has learned how completely he and his family are at the mercy of unemployment, sudden illness, financial disasters, can fail to be moved by the *Times* appeal. The editors of the *Times* are moved by it, too, just before Christmas. But you will find comparatively little in the *Times*, or most other newspapers, about the 100,000,000 Neediest, about social insurance, about the necessity for better relief, about the helplessness of the small investor, about the misery of the great masses of workers. Those who try to help the 100,000,000 Neediest get scant attention in the *Times*. Angelo Herndon tried to help a few hundred of Georgia's Neediest get a little more relief. His conviction for sedition was reversed in the midst of the *Times* campaign this year. The headline told about a "Negro Red Organizer." The editors didn't mention that as a compliment, either.

Next Week

The Nation's Honor Roll for 1935

Correspondence

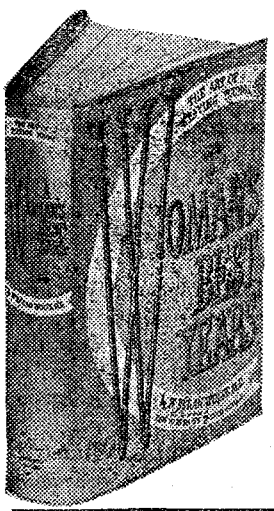
Judicial Calm

To the Editors of The Nation:

I suppose that I should be flattered by the notice which you have taken of a very brief opinion of mine upon the subject of a very poor piece of stage literature. I refer, of course, to your editorial entitled A Long Road, in the issue of November 20. On two points I am not quite able to agree with your editorial writer. I do not pretend to be able to qualify as a dramatic critic with William Winter, nor do I think that Mr. Caldwell quite ranks with Henrik Ibsen.

It takes a great deal of fortitude for a farmhand to clean out a pigsty or privy vault. His language during the process is apt to be quite lurid. Would you consider portraying on the stage this process, including a reproduction of the stench? I would think that such a portrayal might be used for purposes of instruction at least as well as the spineless shiftlessness of Jeeter Lester. At least, manure is used as fertilizer to produce food, and nothing in "Tobacco Road" suggests any such useful purpose.

It probably takes a more competent mentality than mine to discover anything in the Lester family except inexcusable degradation and decadence. I imagine that if I lived in New York City perhaps the superior atmosphere of that world center might sharpen my intellect. But then, of course, New York City is the front doorstep of America. Only, sometimes, I am tempted to think that it would be more accurate to say that it is the front doormat.



A WOMAN'S BEST YEARS

By W. BÉRAN WOLFE, M.D., Psychiatrist
Director, The Community Church Mental Hygiene Clinic, New York

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Oh, and by the way, legal literature does not aim at more than adequately to express a subject. That is the reason why my words were merely "weasel words."

I hope, however, that you will not get the idea from anything that I say that I am insensible of the benefits of being panned by *The Nation* and Theodore Dreiser. I cannot conceive of any two sources from which I would more thankfully accept criticism and disagreement.

Detroit, November 29 GUY A. MILLER,
Judge of the Circuit Court for Detroit

German Steel

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The Nation's remarks in the issue of November 27 on PWA's order for German steel for the Triborough Bridge are rather disappointing. While I admit that the amount involved, $20,000, is insignificant, I feel that the entire deal is indefensible for the moral support that Hitler's government will derive from it. Does anyone doubt that Hitler would gladly have provided the steel free of cost for the prestige that a United States government order bestows upon his tyranny? Does anyone doubt that Hitler with his half-starved, underpaid, undernourished robots, over which the Nazi curse of death or concentration camp hangs, could not and would not underbid any steel order and even smash the aluminum trust if he had the opportunity?

Would the editors of *The Nation* advocate any such savings at the expense of our multitude of wandering jobless workers?

St. Paul, Minn., November 29 WOLFRAM HILL

An Anglo-American Alliance

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

An article by Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard in a July issue of *The Nation* has recently reached me. In it he says, "Some months ago the Marquis of Lothian came to this country to talk up a genuine alliance between the two countries, a plan which he subsequently published in full in the London *Times*." Will you allow me to contradict this statement? I have always been strongly opposed to an Anglo-American alliance for very much the same reasons as Mr. Villard gives in this article, and I have never published any such plan in the London *Times*—or indeed anywhere else.

I am strongly in favor of Anglo-American cooperation because I think the liberty of the world depends upon it, but that cooperation must be based on a completely independent estimate by each of our two countries of international situations as they arise.

London, November 20 LOTHIAN

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

So much time has passed since my reference to the Marquis of Lothian that I cannot put my hands on the notes upon which my comment was based. As I recall it, they called for cooperative action between England and the United States, with the United States in the forefront in the Orient, and England representing our interests more or less in Europe. It seemed to me that this could not come to pass except on the basis of a complete alliance between the two countries for offense and defense. I am sorry if I misinterpreted Lothian's position.

New York, November 27 OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Resettlement Case Records

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I have read your interesting editorial comment in the November 20 issue regarding the alleged case records of investigators for Resettlement Administration projects, and have made inquiries of our Family Selection Section as to the possibility of any basis for these quotations. If these particular newspaper quotations, mentioned in your editorial comment, have actual existence in our thousands of case records of applicants, none of us knows where to find them.

Unfortunately, we would prefer not to assert that these comments have been manufactured out of whole cloth. After all, thousands of families are receiving assistance under the program of the Resettlement Administration. The work of investigating and selecting is going on in practically every county of every state. It would be remarkable indeed if a handful of silly descriptions like these could not be brought to light somewhere in the land to reward a zealous digger.

It is not inconceivable that from the point of view of the investigator these apparently trivial impressionistic statements might bear some meaningful relationship to the type of assistance the families concerned needed. I might add that it is not unheard of for a communication of an impressionistic nature to reach this office directly from a field worker. The same field worker will necessarily obtain and forward to us certain definite items of information prescribed by a comprehensive application form and case-study outline. The type of communication sanctioned by this office and employed as a basis for decision is anything but impressionistic. We are striving to observe a factual and objective, as well as sympathetic, attitude in the selection of families.

R. G. TUGWELL, Administrator
Washington, November 30

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In reply to your letter of November 29 regarding the *Herald Tribune* story on case records of investigators for the Resettlement Administration, I asked our Washington Bureau for a report. The bureau replies that the case-records reports were obtained from an employee of the RRA, whose identity of course cannot be revealed.

The reporter who wrote the original story had the original reports in his possession. They were signed by the RRA investigator. Our bureau adds by way of comment that there is no question of the authenticity of these reports as "no one with the wildest imagination could have made them up exactly as they were."

New York, December 5 GRAFTON S. WILCOX,
Managing Editor, New York *Herald Tribune*

Charles Dudley Warner

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am engaged upon a study of the life and work of Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900), and should appreciate hearing from correspondents who may have information regarding (1) heirs, relatives, and friends of Charles Dudley Warner; (2) unpublished letters and other MSS material; (3) references to obscure, unindexed material in print; (4) personal reminiscences.

Proper credit will be given for assistance sent to 17 Lexington Avenue, New York.

New York, November 30 L. R. TRILLING

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Labor and Industry

General Motors Strikes Back

By H. S. GRANT

Toledo, December 5

THE Chevrolet workers of Toledo have come into the limelight again. Their first spectacular appearance on the national scene was made last spring, when for several weeks it appeared likely that they would accomplish by themselves what the automobile workers in the whole industry had failed to do—defeat the General Motors Corporation. That they did not succeed at the time was no fault of their own; the responsibility rests on the shoulders of Francis J. Dillon, present appointive head of the A. F. of L. Auto International, whose coercive and disruptive tactics saved the automobile industrialists from the threat of a general strike and an organized industry.

Six months have passed since the famous Chevrolet strike, and the big company has taken its revenge—swiftly and efficiently. The Toledo plant has been dismantled, three-fourths of its machinery has been moved out of town, and the men who dared to strike for union recognition and a conservative wage increase have been thrown on the street. In order to appreciate fully this action of the company, one must consider the peculiar effectiveness of the Chevrolet strike of last April, an effectiveness due to the plant's "bottle-neck" character—the factory was responsible for most of the transmissions used by the company. We still remember how plant after plant in other centers was forced to shut down till 35,000 workers were affected by the strike of the 2,000 Toledo men.

Even during the strike the company sought frantically to adjust the situation by a rapid decentralization. Such an operation was difficult in the midst of high production, with the machinery of the struck plant tied up. The best the company could do was to increase production in other plants, a process that was attempted at Flint. But here they ran into the more ominous danger of a sympathetic strike, which would undoubtedly have spread on a national scale and would have materialized anyway but for the intercession of the protean Francis Dillon, who three times ordered the Flint unions to rescind strike-action decisions.

Though the Toledo strike was settled and the immediate menace to General Motors removed—again through Dillon, who threatened that unless the union accepted what was tantamount to the company's terms it would be expelled from the A. F. of L.—the Chevrolet Company felt no assurance that a future similar uprising might not again find it vitally exposed. The young union, conscious of its power, was growing more and more assertive. Besides the four-cent blanket wage increase granted by the company in the settlement of the strike, close to a thousand individual increases of as much as twenty cents an hour had been gained by the union since that time, in addition to a general betterment of conditions.

About a month ago the plant shut down, ostensibly for readjustments in anticipation of the new season, which was due to start earlier than usual. When, however, it became clear that the company intended to move machinery out of the plant, the union committee got on the job. Alfred Gulliver, plant manager, assured them faithfully that "as many men would be hired by the company as before." In fact, some heavy new machinery was brought in, but when the plant was ready to reopen, it was discovered that this was to be used for accessory purposes and would require only a handful of men. When reminded of his former promise, Mr. Gulliver, who had for several weeks been seeking to disarm the union with liberal concessions, evaded the issue with cynical deftness. "But I didn't say *where* the men would be hired," he declared. Apparently Mr. Gulliver expected the altruism of the men to match his own. However, it must be remembered that Mr. Gulliver has been assured a position as head of the new set-up in Saginaw, Michigan, where most of the Toledo units have been moved. What arouses the Toledo men chiefly is the fact that the workers who are to take over their jobs in Saginaw and in Muncie, Indiana, are unorganized and will work for two-thirds or one-half of the Toledo hourly rate.

The responsibility for this cruel situation comes home to roost once more in the yard of the A. F. of L., which has made and is making little effort to organize the unorganized workers of these plants. On the other hand, its lately re-enunciated disastrous policy of dividing mass-production workers into a multitude of craft unions leaves it weaponless in this and similar situations. There can be no doubt that this anti-industrial-union policy is aiding all the open or concealed company unions which fester in the industry. Even now the federated group of Toledo automobile unions, the most powerful and aggressive local in the country, which has heretofore operated as a unit, is threatening to secede from the American Federation of Labor because the new Auto International is refusing to grant it the single charter under which it has been functioning so magnificently in the past.

As is too often the case, the only efforts to prevent a fresh disaster for the automobile workers are coming from the workers themselves, from the fighting unionists, from the staunch and capable progressive leaders. The policy that General Motors is pursuing at the Toledo plant is a national policy, and it is already affecting South Bend, Cleveland, and other centers, though none so seriously as the Chevrolet factory. The response, the men know and have long known, must be national. The key to the situation, they realize, is the organization of the unorganized, so that isolated organizations of the most advanced workers shall no longer be sacrificed to the fetish of the open shop. The Toledo union is looking with great hope to John L. Lewis, whose promise to help the workers in the basic industries to organize themselves may become the turning-point not only for the workers of this second largest industry but for all organized and unorganized labor in America.

The Toledo Chevrolet local understands the scope of its problem and its own incapacity in the face of it. It has been forced into a position where preservation of the union itself becomes the immediate objective. At its decisive meet-

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ing on Saturday, November 16, reports were given by union delegates who had been at Saginaw, Cleveland, Norwood, and Muncie, reconnoitering the situation, soliciting rank-and-file aid, and stirring up organization in the backward centers which are going to benefit temporarily by the plight of the more progressive Toledo workers. Wyndham Mortimer, president of the strong White Motor local of Cleveland and one of the national progressive leaders, spoke at the meeting.

Mortimer and local leaders of the union—including the youthful Jim Roland, famous for his uncompromising conduct of last April's strike—pointed out three possible courses of action that were open to the Chevrolet local:

1. Accept the company's offer to rehire 761 men according to seniority, and allow the 1,600 others to shift for themselves. (The 761 would include more than 100 foremen who were to be assigned to production work.) This, it was certain, would smash the union.

2. Shut the plant down completely and let no one go back to work until the removed machinery was returned. There was much support for this step, but it was realized that in the present unorganized state of the industry the action would be suicidal.

3. Let the whole force return on a share-the-work basis till help could be mustered nationally, with the organization of the plants at Saginaw and Muncie and other places as primary objectives. This step alone could keep the union intact, a fact that undoubtedly swayed the majority of the embittered men who were anxious for a more direct policy.

There was no doubt of the men's willingness to act in case the company refused their terms. (One hears now of the Motor Products workers of Detroit, three thousand of them, going out on strike for a series of demands.) The automobile workers have been the most abused and hornswoggled labor group in the country. Naturally progressive, their many starts toward organization and action in the past two and one-half years have been repeatedly forestalled—by a merit clause, by a Rooseveltian "New Course in Social Engineering," by an Automobile Labor Board, by craft-unionist vultures who have denied them the only form of organization possible for their industry. But these obstacles cannot be permanently effective. The horrible speed-up conditions in the industry, the low yearly wage, the terror of the early age limit, so ruthlessly exploited by Henry Ford and his competitors, are productive of forces too dynamic to be crushed forever.

Minneapolis: A Defeat for Green

By CARLOS HUDSON

Minneapolis, December 1

ON November 13 William Green's red-drive on the Minneapolis labor movement was exactly two weeks old. In various parts of the city workers were gathering. In the hall of General Drivers' Local 574 some seven hundred members were seated waiting for a stag show to begin. Suddenly word came that the police were preparing to raid the hall and arrest the leaders on charges of immorality. A dozen squad cars were waiting at the Northside police station, two newspapers already had the headlines set announcing the raid, the cops were busy rounding up prostitutes who were to serve as a background in photographs of the union leaders. Bill Brown, president of Local 574, advanced to the front of the stage and announced the discovery of the proposed frame-up. A dozen plain-clothes men were discovered in the crowd. Angrily the audience left, cursing Meyer Lewis and Mayor Latimer.

At another downtown hall several hundred members of the Laundry Workers' Local 18005 were meeting. A few days before, Meyer Lewis had demanded that they repudiate Local 574. This the laundry workers refused to do, "because 574 has been one of our most valuable friends and allies. We consider that they have contributed mightily to organized labor in Minneapolis, and that they are deserving of full support in their effort to win reinstatement in the A. F. of L. . . . It is our desire to remain a part of the A. F. of L., but we will not permit ourselves to be stripped of all union principles to do so." Lewis answered this by revoking their charter. At the November 13 meeting, after a spirited discussion, the membership voted unanimously to support the executive board, to support Local 574, and to fight for reinstatement in the A. F. of L.

But the most important meeting of all was the session of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union, before which the "Splitter" himself, Meyer Lewis, was to appear. Not a delegate was absent from the hall that night. William Green's personal representative took the floor and spoke for forty minutes. He demanded that the assembly indorse his efforts to brand Local 574 a "permanent outlaw" and that the delegates back him in the revocation of the laundry workers' charter; he called upon the local unions to boycott the buttons of the General Drivers. As Lewis unfolded his program he was continually interrupted from the floor. When he sat down fifty delegates leaped to their feet simultaneously, demanding an opportunity to answer him. No one in the hall dared to defend him. The meeting finally adjourned in an uproar after midnight, when detectives whisked Lewis out of the meeting. William Green had lost the initial skirmish against the industrial unionists.

Scarcely had the Atlantic City A. F. of L. convention adjourned when Green, Woll, Tobin, and their craft-union followers hurriedly laid down a plan of battle to defend their positions against the John L. Lewis industrial bloc. The first attack was to be launched in Minneapolis, against General Drivers' Local 574, famous advocate of industrial unionism. Green dispatched his emissary, Meyer Lewis, to Minneapolis to direct the campaign. Lewis reconnoitered for five weeks; then, on October 30, the first gun was fired. Under cover of a "red drive" Green prepared to blast the industrial unionists from their fortress. "A. F. of L. to Open War on Reds Here" was the headline in the Minneapolis press. The dispatch continued: "The American Federation of Labor, in beginning its national campaign to fight communism, will

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make Minneapolis its headquarters. . . . Officials of several international unions, whom Mr. Green is to send to Minneapolis, will be on the job."

It soon became evident that Green's drive was directed specifically against Local 574, the union that has led the Minneapolis labor battles for the past two years—with the result that local unions have not lost a strike since February, 1934. (In April, 1935, Local 574 was expelled from the International Teamsters' Union, and consequently from the federation.) Meyer Lewis announced, "We hope to throw the spotlight of public opinion on the city and to aim the big guns of the A. F. of L. to settle once and for all Minneapolis labor troubles." He appealed to the employers, labor boards, veterans' organizations, churches, and clubs for help in driving the progressive trade unionists from the city.

Several days later the press carried another headline: "The A. F. of L. Outlaws Local 574 Forever." The General Drivers' Union countered with an overflow mass-meeting of over three thousand members and sympathizers. A battery of loud speakers carried to the audience pledges of solidarity with 574 from the leaders of many local unions and from prominent Farmer-Laborites.

When Lewis appeared before several business men's clubs and announced he was out to rid Minneapolis of "reds," the Citizens' Alliance issued a statement in his support, noting "with hope and encouragement that the American Federation of Labor, through a personal representative of William Green, has announced the determination even at this late date to purge the local labor movement of communistic leadership. . . . It was the leaders of certain local A. F. of L. unions who brought into the picture the forces of the General Drivers' Union and the Workers' Party of the United States to forcibly close the ornamental-iron plants and the Strutwear Knitting Company. . . . We pledge to cooperate to the fullest extent in cleaning up the intolerable conditions existing here." Such an embrace from labor's chief enemy served only to discredit Lewis in trade-union circles.

With the help of the president of the National Council of Petroleum Workers Lewis said he would purge the Gasoline Station Operators' Local, which had been supporting Local 574. A few days later the union was declared purged though there had not been a single change in the personnel of the local. Lewis then demanded that the Laundry Workers' Union repudiate 574 and submit to reorganization and division. The results have already been noted.

On Thursday, October 31, he called a special meeting of all business agents and demanded their support. They listened in silence. On Tuesday, November 12, a meeting of business agents came out openly against Lewis, and the session had to be hurriedly adjourned. Lewis then proceeded to get in touch with employers with whom Local 574 has labor contracts, asking them to break these contracts and sign up with Local 500, Daniel Tobin's "ghost" drivers' local in Minneapolis. Unanimously the employers refused his request, having no desire to precipitate another battle with the drivers. Lewis then shifted to the Cooks and Waiters and attempted to whip them into line. The president of the Cooks' and Waiters' International sent Green an indignant telegram protesting against Lewis's actions. Mr. Gillespie, Tobin's lieutenant, came to town to aid in the fight against 574. Gillespie was in Minneapolis two days, threw up his hands in despair, and departed.

By this time Lewis had talked so much about "reds" and "illegal" union activities that the employers, taking him at his word, proceeded to demand that the Strutwear Hosiery Plant be opened by police violence (the hosiery workers there had been on strike for fourteen weeks). The Minneapolis Central Labor Union descended upon Mayor Latimer with a threat to "tear the plant down, brick by brick" if such an attempt were made. After Lewis was worsted in his appearance before the Central Labor Union, and after the raid on 574's hall had been scotched, William Green's man had shot his bolt. He was licked.

The attack on the Minneapolis progressives by the president of the American Federation of Labor naturally had its political reverberations. Green is a Republican, Daniel Tobin is a Democrat, and Minnesota is the one state in the country that has broken politically with the two old parties and has built up an independent political party. The *Minnesota Leader,* state organ of the Farmer-Labor Party, vigorously attacked the Green drive. "Where are the 'reds'?" it asked. "We can take care of the Communists ourselves and don't need assistance from outside the state. . . . It looks like our old foes in new clothes but still dragging the same old red herring around on a string."

The *New Militant,* weekly organ of the Workers' Party, has of course supported Local 574, as it has most at stake in the Minneapolis battle. The Communist Party's *Daily Worker* came out editorially on November 6 with "Lewis is attacking the very teamsters who have led Minneapolis labor's most heroic struggles. . . . Let all labor repudiate Meyer Lewis's anti-labor acts and drive him from Minneapolis." However, the local Communist Party trade unionists withdrew their support from Local 574 the night before the mass-meeting, and refused to send speakers.

The Minneapolis progressive unionists have sent out nation-wide appeals for aid in their fight for industrial unionism. They have asked the Brewery Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Hosiery Workers, and the labor committee of the Socialist Party for organizational and financial assistance in the fight. Without a doubt John L. Lewis's recently organized committee for industrial organization has established contact in Minneapolis, instructing its forces to join with Local 574 in defeating William Green and Meyer Lewis. Norman Thomas has written to pledge national support to Local 574. Emil Rieve, president of the Hosiery Workers, has notified 574 that he is "doing everything possible to prevent the American Federation of Labor from making the mistake of going on a 'red-baiting' campaign." With this kind of support from all progressive labor forces in the country, Local 574 and the Minneapolis labor movement have been able to block Green and the craft unionists.

Of great significance is the fact that former reactionary labor leaders, such as T. E. Cunningham, president of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor, are already pulling away from William Green, and are either sitting on the fence or openly siding with the industrial-union bloc. Cunningham has indicated that he will disapprove any attempt to oust progressive trade unionists fighting for industrial unionism. A dozen local labor leaders have taken the same position. Green and his cohorts are not defeated yet, of course, but they have suffered a spectacular set-back.

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Books, Art, Drama

The Untired Genius

Unpublished Poems of Emily Dickinson. Edited by Her Niece, Martha Dickinson Bianchi, and Alfred Leete Hampson. Little, Brown and Company. $7.50.

THE editors of these new poems by Emily Dickinson merely remark about them that they were "disclosed during the exhaustive examination of the Dickinson family papers made obligatory by the increasing posthumous fame of the poet." Nothing as to whether there are any more; nothing as to where these came from, and when (if such a thing can be guessed) they might have been written. Obviously there is still a great deal to be "done," as the scholars say, with Emily Dickinson. Not only does the quality of her genius remain a mystery, as it well may forever; the quantity of it—the fact, for instance, that the number of her known poems is now 758—grows yearly more amazing, and calls for a kind of light which the Dickinson family either cannot or will not throw upon such important questions as chronology, text, and circumstance of composition. The frontispiece to this volume, indeed, throws a beam of darkness on one portion of the text. The editors reproduce in manuscript facsimile the poem which they have printed on page 57; and do not trouble to explain why in the second line they have printed "hide" as "hid." The study of Emily Dickinson has not even begun, and certainly it will not be finished until we know that we have everything—and everything as it was written.

She will deserve all the attention that can be given her, nor will the amount of her output ever cease to seem remarkable. It means already, I think, that she was a poet before she was anything else—a recluse, a woman disappointed in love, a New England person, an eccentric. Particularly a woman disappointed in love. Women like that—or men—do not necessarily take to poetry in a world where there are so many other things to take to: public causes, private revenges, marriages on the rebound, silence, and suicide. And surely it is rare that the impulse toward poetry in such a case leads to the composition of more than a few bad personal pieces; that it lasts a lifetime and inspires brilliance after brilliance, revision after revision, together with a palpable concern for the most subtle, the most intricate effects. This woman was an artist first and last; which, if it is true, means that several poems in her new collection are more interesting for what they say to mankind than for what they say, provided they say anything, about the mythical lover from whom she is supposed to have been separated.

> To make one's toilette, after Death
> Has made the toilette cool
> To only taste we care to please,
> Is difficult; and still—
>
> That's easier than braid the hair
> And make the bodice gay,
> When eyes that fondled it are wrenched
> By Decalogues away.

The interest of such a poem derives at least in part from the presence in it of familiar themes and devices, notably the theme of death and the device of dissonance. The theme of death, like the theme of pain, was perhaps never absent from Emily Dickinson's mind; it glowed, a midnight diamond, even at the core of her ecstasies, and supplied her with her deepest phrases.

> She bore it till the simple veins
> Traced azure on her hand,
> Till pleading, round her quiet eye,
> The purple crayons stand;
> Till daffodils had come and gone,
> I cannot tell the sum,
> And then she ceased to bear it—
> And with the Saints sat down.

Pain, of course, is a poor word. Agony is better, and I do not know that agony has ever been given completer expression than it is given in half a dozen of these poems.

Yet it is never distressing to the audience, the reason being that the subject of any poem is but an aspect of a larger subject which is not personal in the ordinary sense. The value of the present volume is that it makes finally very clear how intense its author's existence was; how intense, indeed, all existence was to her, and how much terror there could be for her merely in the thought that a given individual thing had been created—a bird, a day, herself.

> I am afraid to own a body,
> I am afraid to own a soul;
> Profound, precarious property,
> Possession not optional.

To dismiss such lines as the confession of one who was "afraid of life" is to forget how the imagination of any person with a capacity for abstraction (and was not Emily Dickinson a metaphysical poet?) trembles before the fact of the concrete, the object into which infinities of space and time have been so unaccountably crowded, the delicate thing which somehow endures eternity's pressure against its form. Nothing less than all that is the source of Emily Dickinson's irony, and of her poetry. But the volume is important for a simpler reason. It contains nine or ten of the best poems she ever wrote.

MARK VAN DOREN

The Origins of Fascismo

Mussolini's Italy. By Herman Finer. Henry Holt and Company. $3.75.

AT a moment when the Duce of Fascism is staking his own future, as well as that of his regime, on the outcome of his Ethiopian campaign, it is more important than ever to obtain a trustworthy account of Fascist origins and objectives. In this comprehensive work Dr. Finer, professor of public administration at the University of London, offers a wealth of detailed information concerning Italy's political situation before the March on Rome, the character and background of Mussolini, and the doctrines and institutions of fascism. Couched in the form of a textbook and written for the most part in pedestrian style, "Mussolini's Italy" is a valuable compendium of generally known facts rather than an original analysis. The publisher's blurb is decidedly misleading in describing it as "strictly objective reporting." Objectivity can hardly be called the hallmark of a book permeated by the honest anti-Fascist indignation of a firm believer in democracy and peppered with often violent personal attacks on various aspects of fascism.

Dr. Finer does not believe that fascism constituted a revolution, under his somewhat arbitrary definition that a revolution must be not merely any "violent overthrow of existing political institutions," but one that "has for its object the greatest liberty and equality for the greatest number." This point of view leads the author into some curious contradictions. While obviously hostile to fascism, Dr. Finer, for unaccountable reasons, looks at pre-Mussolini Italy through Fascist spectacles. Fascism, he argues, conforms in a sense to the political institu-

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tions of a country where the parliamentary system had failed to take root before 1914. He believes that on the eve of the World War Italy "was heading for troubled times and extraordinary regimes," and that "a generation was preparing itself for submission to a dictator." Yet he attacks Mussolini and his Black Shirts for failing to resolve "national contrasts" by liberal methods.

According to Dr. Finer, fascism triumphed in Italy because of "murderous ruthlessness, the deliberate planning of revolution," and the connivance of local and central authorities, including the king and the army. Yet his own account shows that at least in equal measure the success of fascism was due to the disorganization and indecisiveness of Socialists and liberals, the general demoralization and disillusionment which followed the war, and the genuine if baseless fear on the part of the middle classes, both rich and poor, that the advent of bolshevism in Italy would spell the end of private property and the destruction of the family—two institutions cherished by the average Italian.

Severe as is Dr. Finer's criticism of fascist theory and practice, he appears to have sincere respect and even admiration for Mussolini, to whom he attributes a Homeric roster of gifts and virtues. Mussolini, according to him, "has a profound knowledge of men," science, and philosophy; "his penetration is extremely subtle"; he possesses histrionic ability of a high order and a supreme talent for winning and holding the people; "he has, and gives the impression of having, a complete contempt for material rewards"—although he has not forsworn the perhaps more exhilarating rewards of unlimited power; he is endowed with astonishing will and great personal fascination; finally, he is dominated by genuine love and concern for Italy—even if these sentiments cannot always be distinguished from personal ambition. Where this superman has erred is in failing to recognize "that he is exceptional and different from the mass of Italians"—a failure which it is difficult to reconcile with Mussolini's conception of himself as the "man of destiny"—and that he cannot fundamentally change them during his lifetime.

It would have been extremely interesting if Dr. Finer had paused to develop the idea which he hints at here and there—that the modern dictator like Hitler or Mussolini differs profoundly from his prototype of ancient times in his concern for the approval of public opinion. While vilifying democracy and all its works, the modern tyrant is forced to pay lip-service, at least, to the spirit of the times: he cultivates the impression that he represents the sovereign, if unconscious and unexpressed, will of the ignorant masses, and makes every effort to win popular support by spectacular propaganda and constant participation in the daily life of "his" people. "A modern dictatorship," says Dr. Finer, "implies a continuous plebiscite, an election campaign every day"—which takes the form of public festivals and celebrations marked by the personal appearance of the "leader" or his immediate subordinates and geared to keep popular excitement at fever pitch.

Turning to the economic achievement of fascism, Dr. Finer reaches the now generally accepted conclusion that fascism has so far done little beyond effecting minor corrections of the capitalist system, retaining private property and production as the fundamental basis of the country's economy. He suspects Mussolini, however, of "a violent, if publicly controlled, nostalgia for Russia," and indicates that the erstwhile Socialist might some day turn the tables on the bankers, industrialists, and landowners who have supported fascism as a bulwark against expropriation. Now that the tide of war is running against Italy, it is not at all unlikely that Mussolini, as a last resort, may wave the red rag of proletarian revolution to frighten both property-owners at home and capitalist countries abroad.

In drawing up the balance sheet of spiritual gains and losses under fascism, Dr. Finer contends that the losses have far exceeded the gains, especially with respect to the stultification or total suppression of creative thought. Far from being ennobled by fascism, Italy has been demoralized by the people's "absenteeism from politics" and its subservience to a single party. Far from fostering the simple virtues extolled by Mussolini, fascism "puts a premium on successful humbug, flattery, and bluff." While superficially the country may have achieved national unity, fascism has at the same time destroyed the internal cohesiveness which springs from free association of men for political, economic, and other purposes. "Even the propaganda for war is making not warriors but only resignation to war." Most dangerous of all, fascism, concentrated in the person of one man, has made no arrangements for its peaceful continuance. "The fascist system depends on a genius, and with his passage it must pass."

VERA MICHELES DEAN

The Historical Jesus

Jesus. By Charles Guignebert. Alfred A. Knopf. $6.

THIS volume on the life of Jesus by the professor of the history of Christianity in the Sorbonne is one of the 200 contemplated volumes of historical studies in the monumental "History of Civilization" series, edited by Professor C. K. Ogden of Cambridge. The volume maintains and enhances the scholarly prestige of this great historical undertaking.

The literature on the life of Jesus continues to be tremendous. It includes not only the detailed studies of the hundreds of New Testament specialists of the various Christian nations but the innumerable ventures of interested laymen and literati who have tried to rewrite the life of Jesus from the point of view of a particular social philosophy. The virtue of Professor Guignebert's venture lies in his comprehensive analysis of the scholarship of the past decades in this field. The specialists are acquainted with all the evidence which he analyzes. But there is no book of recent years which will give the interested layman a more comprehensive account of what has been written and said about the life of Jesus and a fairer estimate of conflicting evidence.

Naturally, the author has a position of his own to maintain, but the reader is permitted to see how he arrives at it and with what cogency and plausibility he defends it against contrasting views. On the whole his own position is strongly influenced by the eschatological emphasis which was introduced into New Testament criticism by Albert Schweitzer. Jesus was a prophet of an imminent Kingdom of God. Guignebert's view is not, however, in accord with those who believe that Jesus regarded himself as the Messiah. He thought of himself rather as the prophet of the Kingdom.

His ethic is not to be confused with an ascetic ethic. It was rather a rigorous ethic, deriving its rigor from Jesus's complete indifference toward the moral relativities of the political and economic order, and maintaining itself by the hope of the imminent Kingdom. This hope was disappointed. "The last things which Jesus expected did not happen. . . . By all the canons of logic and probability his name and his work should have fallen into oblivion." They became rather the foundation of a new religion, partly through the faith inspired in a few disciples and partly through the operation of complex syncretistic forces in the religious life of the Graeco-Roman world. In this new religion "nothing or very little of his work remained—a few vestiges survived, perhaps, in the imposing edifice of Christian doctrine, but they lost their meaning when separated from their original connection."

One might quarrel with the sweeping character of this final generalization. But it could not be refuted without a

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complete examination of the meaning of Christianity. In terms of obvious history it is certainly true that Christianity is not the religion of Jesus. Nor is it possible to correct whatever limitations are found in Christianity by a simple return to the so-called religion of Jesus. For the religion of Jesus is not quite as simply and immediately relevant to the present situation as the liberal scholars of yesterday imagined. But neither are Jesus's apocalyptic visions quite as irrelevant to the spiritual problems of modern man as Professor Guignebert imagines. They contain clues for an interpretation of life and history which the author does not analyze at all.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Remaking Mankind

Man the Unknown. By Alexis Carrel. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

IS there help in biological science for the difficulties of mankind? This is the question dealt with by the distinguished biologist of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. The present predicament of man, he holds, results from the fact that "the sciences of inert matter have made immense progress while those of living things remain in a rudimentary state." In consequence there has been produced an environment which is not fitted to the nature of man, to which man cannot adapt himself. "Man . . . is a stranger in the world that he has created. He has been incapable of organizing this world for himself, because he did not possess a practical knowledge of his own nature. Thus the enormous advance gained by the sciences of inanimate matter over those of living things is one of the greatest catastrophes ever suffered by humanity. The environment born of our intelligence and our inventions is adjusted neither to our stature nor to our shape. We are unhappy. We degenerate morally and mentally. . . . In truth, our civilization, like those preceding it, has created certain conditions of existence which, for reasons still obscure, render life itself impossible" (pp. 27, 28). It is "bringing about the demoralization and the disappearance of the noblest elements of the great races" (p. 43).

"The only possible remedy for this is a much more profound knowledge of ourselves" (p. 28), in order that we may change the conditions to fit our natures. "Most of the questions put to themselves by those who study human beings remain without answer" (p. 4). Nevertheless, "the biological sciences have revealed to us the most precious of all secrets—the laws of the development of our body and of consciousness. This knowledge has brought to humanity the means of renovating itself" (p. 273).

What biological science has thus revealed is painted in broad strokes. There is an excellent summary of the physical, chemical, physiological, and genetic knowledge of man, of the nature of disease, and of the facts and principles of adaptation. Of equal or greater importance are held to be the mental and the moral nature of man; chapters are devoted to these and to the importance of individuality. The exposition is not limited to the narrow categories of conventional biological science. "The study of moral, aesthetic, and religious functions would appear as indispensable as that of mathematics, physics, and chemistry" (p. 280). Going farther, Carrel avows himself a wholehearted believer in telepathy, clairvoyance, and miracles, as established features in the nature of man. The numerous pages on these subjects are of curious interest.

The renovation of mankind based on this scientific knowledge of man's nature must be carried out on many diverse lines, which are urged with eloquence. First, "We cannot undertake the restoration of ourselves and of our environment before having transformed our habits of thought" (p. 278). Certain erroneous metaphysical conceptions are held to lie at the foundation of man's troubles, notably the doctrine of the dualism of body and mind, that of the existence of universals, and that of the unimportance of secondary qualities. We must abandon these; we must develop a "contempt for philosophical systems" that we may study man without prejudice.

Next science must be reformed: drastic measures to this end are urged. But most important is the increase of the factual knowledge of the nature of man. As a road to this, Carrel proposes the following. Medical science "could easily enlarge its field, embrace in addition to body and consciousness their relations with the material and mental world, take in sociology and economics, and become the very science of the human being" (p. 284). Of this type permanent institutes should be established that may carry on investigations requiring generations for completion. A chief function of these institutes will be to make a synthesis of all knowledge that bears upon human affairs, and to furnish such knowledge to those in administrative positions. There should be a central body, a high council, having these functions. "Modern society should be given an intellectual focus, an immortal brain, capable of conceiving and planning its future. . . . Such an organization would be the salvation of the white races in their staggering advance toward civilization" (pp. 291, 292).

The concrete measures to be taken are to be determined by this immortal brain: "We will not establish any program. For a program would stifle living reality in a rigid armor. It would prevent the bursting forth of the unpredictable" (p. 321). Yet many features of the program as conceived by him Carrel does indicate. "In order to reconstruct personality we must break the frame of the school, factory, and office, and reject the very principle of technological civilization" (p. 315). "We should reject mechanical inventions that hinder human development" (p. 281). "Hygienists should be asked . . . why they segregate people ill with infections, and not those who propagate intellectual and moral maladies" (p. 280). "The democratic principle has contributed to the collapse of civilization in opposing the development of an elite" (p. 271). "The only way to obviate the disastrous predominance of the weak is to develop the strong. . . . We must single out the children who are endowed with high potentialities, and develop them as completely as possible. And in this manner give the nation a nonhereditary aristocracy. . . . The sons of very rich men, like those of criminals, should be removed while still infants from their natural surroundings. Thus separated from their family, they could manifest their hereditary strength" (p. 297). "Perhaps prisons should be abolished. . . . The conditioning of petty criminals with the whip, or some more scientific procedure, followed by a short stay in a hospital, would probably suffice to insure order. Those who have murdered, robbed while armed, . . . kidnapped children, despoiled the poor of their savings, misled the public in important matters, should be humanely and economically disposed of in small euthanasic institutions supplied with proper gases. A similar treatment could be advantageously applied to the insane, guilty of criminal acts" (p. 319). Equally radical proposals are advanced on many other social problems. Most of them look toward the remaking of the human environment. Yet eugenics is to play a role also, though a relatively subordinate one. Seriously defective individuals are not to propagate; "a great race must propagate from its best elements." "It seems that eugenics, to be useful, must be voluntary." In view of the author's firm conviction of the reality of telepathy, clairvoyance, and the miraculous results of prayer, it appears remarkable that no provision for the development of these powers appears among his recommendations.

Throughout his presentation the author employs a free

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and inspirational style, making much use of the device of absolute and over-emphatic statement in order to leave an impression. When this is done in expounding both sides of a question, it results in an appearance of contradiction; this is not infrequent. The book is a freely sketched picture of the views to which a man engaged in science has come rather than a restrained statement of the results of scientific research.

H. S. JENNINGS

World Outlooks

American Philosophy, Today and Tomorrow. Edited by H. M. Kallen and Sidney Hook. Lee Furman. $3.75.

THIS is a "free-range" symposium of twenty-five American philosophers—professional and non-professional—who have been asked to expound their attitudes and outlooks in terms of their personal development, and to indicate what they individually regard as the most pressing problems of the future. The reader who has not studied a similar experiment in a compilation of 1930 known as "Contemporary American Philosophers" might expect nothing more than a confusing kaleidoscope of philosophic fragments. But strange as it may seem, this present work contains much homogeneity, more perhaps than the former symposium of older philosophers.

In the back of most of these twenty-five minds there seems to be the same set of related propositions, namely, that philosophy and science can possess no absolutes, that rationality is extremely limited, and that uncertainty and indeterminacy pervade the universe, whose every element is transitory and relative in value.

Nearly all these writers take great pains to prove the above propositions, even though none of them are newly discovered. A few of the symposiasts broodingly expound these principles without daring to offer a solution or hope; others, tougher in spirit, either rejoice like Spartans at such difficulties or soberly and doggedly proceed to solve at least part of the riddle by some pragmatic means, be it logical, empirical, or a combination of both. The more aesthetic thinkers seek refuge in the realm of art, while their religious colleagues turn to the traditional security of Catholicism or to a future of applied socialism. Lastly, there are several superbly imaginative members of this group who soar high above it all on the wings of imagination.

In the first category we find H. T. Costello discussing one aspect of the modern philosophic enigma in a breezy, commonplace rehash of the philosophy of science, and afterwards chitchatting his way about the realm of economics without attempting or seeming to desire to arrive at any conclusion. Among those with pragmatic solutions is R. T. Flewelling, who suggests the need of a good working hypothesis. Alain Locke bravely dethrones all absolutes but warns us to be careful not to "exile our imperatives, for after all we live by them." Wilmot Sheldon, chiefly concerned with metaphysics, contends that each philosophic system must be made to correspond with the "rich specific details of things"; while E. S. Bates adds that what we need to practice is to "know with the greatest exactitude what is, and then plan to deal with the case as it is by the most approved means." Harry Overstreet criticizes the education of philosophers, deploring their lust for the second-hand facts of history and their ignorance of economics and political science; John H. Randall, Jr., shows quite convincingly how the philosopher can gain insight into modern problems by a study of the continual readaptation of materials in the light of the changing needs and problems of the past.

The following three philosophers meet present-day problems with suggestions for either a complete system of philosophy or a carefully planned logical analysis. Kurt Koffka shows how the changing universe can be interpreted in terms of organizations and reorganizations of wholes, and Paul Weiss likewise hints at a new system, despite the fact that he defines progress as the "substitution of bad solutions for worse ones." Ernest Nagel presents a brilliant interpretation of philosophy in terms of an analysis of categories and outlines his conception of the proper compromise between rationalism and empiricism.

Will Durant and Irwin Edman find a solution in religion and art respectively. The former sadly abandons all dogmas and creeds, but consoles and distracts himself with the poetry and drama of religion; the latter maintains that the meaning of existence still depends on a "single absolute system of good, meaning and value," and points to the realm of art, where goods are most explicitly and adequately realized and sustained. Felix Cohen turns to socialism for a reassertion of moral and social responsibility; while Michael Williams, standing on the edge of modern enigmas with his back to the gorge below, tells us with stout faith everything that we already know about Aquinas and Catholicism. Finally we find T. V. Smith's fancy carrying him far beyond the realms of academic empiricism and rationalism to the more profitable realm of state politics, exclaiming all the way that "everything imaginable is possible" and that "imagination is the only source of distinctly human value." Arthur Murphy more modestly advocates the use of mystical and semi-mystical beginnings "for all that they are worth."

The interesting views of H. M. Kallen, Sidney Hook, H. W. Schneider, and several others cannot be commented upon since their problems were sufficiently different to prevent them from being included in a general scheme which seemed to offer the one hope of condensing and organizing this review.

LIVINGSTON WELCH

Robinson's Last Poem

King Jasper. By Edwin Arlington Robinson. The Macmillan Company. $2.

"KING JASPER," published posthumously, is the last message to the living of Edwin Arlington Robinson, undoubtedly one of America's finest poets. After several long poems which were studies of the intricate reactions of individual minds to death, Robinson wrote, as his last poem, a study of the disintegration of a society. "King Jasper" is related in a very definite way to Robinson's "Merlin" (published in 1917 in the war period), which was an analysis, with the old legend as reference, of an age returning to barbarism.

In "King Jasper" the kingdom is obviously an industrial one. Here two forces are drawn up against each other, the forces of enthroned power and the forces of revolt. In Robinson's conception neither force can endure. King Jasper's kingdom is being dragged down by the hands of time. Hebron, (the name is symbolic of revolt) sets fire, however, to a city and a palace already lost. Only Zoë (Life) remains at last on the tragic stage, and she, once the wife of the prince, later the prisoner of the revolutionary, must go on alone.

This is the story. Mr. Robinson's meaning is clear. In his last year he turned to look at the modern scene, and in that scene he saw little hope. Writing with his usual steady power, he put down his final poetic interpretation of our period. "King Jasper" is one of his best long poems because Robinson felt so deeply about his subject. Violence and ruthlessness on the part of those in or out of power aroused horror in a man whose search had been for the spiritual significance of life. His was the interest of the puritan who threw off the bleakness of his religion because of a belief in the living spirit.

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Robinson inherited from Tennyson the belief that something in the human mind forced people "to follow the gleam." He did not inherit Tennyson's pictorial lushness, for he sprang from a sparser soil. New England to the core, he used the characters he saw about him, their speech, their ways of living. He abhorred any plush Victorian poetic prettiness. Nevertheless, he held out to the last against modern materialistic thinking and kept faith with something inherent in Victorian idealism, the belief that man is essentially a spiritual being, a concept which the industrialism and materialism of Robinson's own day seemed to contradict. And perhaps such interpretations as were given materialism by the American middle class and its philosophers did indeed contradict any spiritual values.

EDA LOU WALTON

Shorter Notices

The Victorians and Their Reading. By Amy Cruse. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

This work "attempts to show what books, good and bad, were actually read by the Victorians during the first fifty years of the Queen's reign, what they thought of them, and how their reactions influenced the future output." Biographies, autobiographies, correspondence, novels, essays, and periodical literature of the time have been studied for the highly complex interaction of religious, social, scientific, and artistic movements, readers of various classes, and writers. We see the reputations of the great Victorians in the making and can more readily pardon their frequent yielding to the tremendous pressure of a reading public intent on moral edification and practical utility. Mrs. Cruse writes to instruct rather than to startle or amuse. She is saturated with the atmosphere of the period and yet detached. The proportions of the book are admirably historical; almost one-quarter, for instance, is devoted to religion in its various manifestations. The study is descriptive rather than analytical, little concerned with statistics as to sales and advertising, not impeccable in the finer shades of fact and chronology, and without the bibliographical apparatus that would make it useful for reference. Although it contains information instructive to the scholar, it appeals primarily to the amateur, to the general reader who knows the Victorians and relishes unbiased comment upon them, an audience less extensive, one fears, in the United States than in Mrs. Cruse's England.

Time Past. By Marie Scheikévitch. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

"Society life also amuses him," Madame Scheikévitch remarks of the elderly Widor, and the same would seem to be true for all the other well-fed, well-groomed, and generally well-behaved members of the Paris literary and artistic menagerie which this daughter of the Russian aristocracy has tended, sometimes quite literally, in the last thirty years. In fact, you get the impression from these memoirs that life in the upper reaches of Bohemia is much more a matter of "a cup of tea and *petits-fours*," in Valéry's phrase, than any solitary tussle with the Muses. You will see Anatole France spending years of his life extricating himself from the doting Madame de Caillavet; D'Annunzio bearing votive carnations to the Comtesse de Noailles; Valéry dropping his monocle long enough to unroll a few crisply prepared epigrams during the meat course; and Proust, of course, the cher Marcel of Crillon days, challenging a certain Marquis de Médicis to a duel because of an imagined insult to the author. It is a world in which a mountebank like Rostand can remark from the balcony of a Montmartre restaurant: "To think that this Parisian crowd will always be ignorant that two poets are tonight gazing upon it: Anna de Noailles and Edmond Rostand." It is a world in which someone like Boni de Castellane can amuse himself by wearing shirts "the color of his eyes or the color of his cheeks." These reminiscences are a nostalgic evocation of a period when the bourgeois were so kind to their entertainers that they permitted hardly more than two or three of them to survive. Madame Scheikévitch communicates something of the melancholy charm of a personality which apparently became part of the tradition of French letters from Jules Lemaître to Jean Cocteau. But it is too difficult to secure much interest from people who seem to be suffering one and all from *encephalitis lethargica,* and one can only hope for Madame Scheikévitch's friends, as Madame de Caillavet hoped for her rival, Madame de Loynes, that they have passed into a better demi-monde.

Brothers Three. By John M. Oskison. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

This novel of three brothers, born on an Oklahoma farm and going their different ways through maturity, adds nothing to the present list of farm novels. Mr. Oskison's three heroes have no reality whatever—unless reality means a very limited set of standard characteristics. The brother who turns out to be a cattleman has the hearty mannerisms and speaks the rough lingo that, in books, are supposed to hide a heart of gold; the literary brother utters a few literary phrases which make us aware of nothing so much as the author's naive and rather self-conscious idea of literary people. The brother who becomes a storekeeper is even less definite. At the end of the book, the cowboy brother dies, and the other two find that the depression has played havoc with their fortunes. The farm has become a liability—but they love it too much to sell it. To reach this far from extraordinary conclusion Mr. Oskison has taken us through 448 pages of dull and for the most part irrelevant incidents, described in a tepid, uninspired style.

Golden Apples. By Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

"Golden Apples" promises to become one of the minor best-sellers of the current season. It concerns a young Englishman who comes, broken in spirit, to the "hammock" country of central Florida and there undergoes what the blurb-writers like to call a spiritual regeneration. This glorious consummation develops from his gradual realization of Life, vital, pulsing Life, as it is lived by the share-croppers of the region. The book pretends to realism; but one looks in vain for more than passing reference to the meanness and squalor of an existence miserably eked out. Mrs. Rawlings reasons in the manner of successful writers before her: share-cropping is rustic and earthy, all that is rustic and earthy is necessarily wholesome-and-real, the spectacle of a share-cropping community is therefore just the thing to regenerate a broken-hearted English gentleman. The novel is given over to the staples of petty fiction—tempestuous passion, primitive kindliness, *et al.* It is trite and quite harmless.

Sea Pieces and Other Poems. By Forrest Anderson. The Cassowary Press. $2.

The merit of this verse resides almost wholly in its rhythms and its word textures, by means of which Mr. Anderson succeeds in imparting a variety of moods associated with the sea. The predominant effect is one of reverie, which unfortunately makes pretensions to thought, using the syntactical forms of ratiocination without its substance. The imagery is usually either tenuously romantic ("the sea like a disastrous flower opens to receive us") or overstrained in the search for

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originality ("the salty algebra of your grin"). Since this is a first volume, it cannot be censured severely for being derivative, but Mr. Anderson has not derived very wisely. He has acquired the rhetoric and the affectations of E. E. Cummings without either his lusty humor or his power of vivid presentation; from Hart Crane he has taken tricks which that poet outgrew, such as a bewildering ellipsis and a private system of reference for his symbols. The volume contains a number of good lines and a good poem, Hospital for Seamen, apparently the only one in which the author, a member of the objectivist group, has kept his eye on the object.

Art

The Century of Grace

NEW YORK* is seeing two exhibitions of superlative quality this season, both to remain open till the first week of January. The one of Van Gogh at the Museum of Modern Art and the one of the French eighteenth century at the Metropolitan Museum are alike in a single respect—that the works in them are perfectly chosen; otherwise they differ as widely as it is possible to imagine. Van Gogh is of our time; the eighteenth century seems to many of us immeasurably remote. People approach the work of the great Dutchman as they would a long-lost friend, for in him they find all our romantic love of freedom, all our modern passion, and his, for light and color, the mobility of the light in its newfound fulness of rendering and the intensity of color as it expresses the burning faith of a man who believed with a wholeness of heart that is stirring to a disillusioned day.

The eighteenth-century paintings, sculptures, and engravings are so far from all our turmoil that it is worth while to have glanced at Van Gogh—whose art is completely opposed to them—in order to appreciate the abyss between the two periods. To get an idea of the change wrought in the world by the French Revolution and the perhaps unparalleled activity that followed it in the nineteenth century is to understand why a time like the Renaissance seems nearer to us than the period that closed less than 150 years ago.

If the visitors to the Metropolitan are enjoying the things of the lovely *Dix-huitième,* and there is no doubt that they are, it is pretty certain that many see them only as perfections of craftsmanship, like lace-making or diamond-cutting, rather than as something with the full range of qualities that we attribute to a work of art. Self-expression, the revelation of the intimate movements of the mind, has been enforced upon the world in a way so complete that the poignancy of a primitive or the drama of a Rembrandt seems necessary for great painting.

The eighteenth century has been labeled frivolous, and so people go to it as a relief from modern seriousness. But against a definition of the "Century of Women" in terms of snuffboxes, lace cuffs, and court shoes, the beautiful show at the museum comes as a corrective. We see here not simply the French art of the eighteenth century; we see how much the art of the period is French. The "Century of Men" which preceded it, the *Grand Siècle* of Louis XIV, with its soldiers, its preachers, its architects, its philosophers, and its noble literature, had sent its two greatest painters, Poussin and Claude, and its magnificent sculptor Puget to live in Italy and bring back that Graeco-Roman tradition which had flowered on the soil of France in early times but had been overwhelmed by the great wave of the Gothic. So well did the seventeenth century do its work that the succeeding time could go on in perfect control of the thought that most fully characterizes the European race.

The transition from Bach to Mozart—to glance at the period in its music—may not seem easy, yet no lover of those masters fails to appreciate the logic of that line of composers. We need to see that Watteau carries on, in exactly parallel fashion, the sobriety and the classical purity of Poussin into a time when France adds the gay exuberance of its Flemish provinces to the measure and balance of its Latin heritage. The elegiac landscape of Claude appears even less modified than the epic or lyric art of the figure learned from Poussin when we see the parks of Watteau and his school, the clear-eyed views of French and Italian scenes of Hubert Robert, and the landscapes with which Vernet and Louis Gabriel Moreau foreshadowed Corot. The latter's art, continuing that of the past more easily than Beethoven builds in his youth on Mozart, tells us again how unified is the genius of Europe. Louis David, the incarnation of the revolution, that "deluge" prophesied by Louis XV, is merely the unshakable pivot that swings the eighteenth century into the nineteenth. With him one must also think of Prud'hon, who binds the two periods together. His absence here, due to the difficulty of getting a picture of his dating from before 1800, is perhaps our one regret in the presence of this wonderful group of master works which we owe to the generous cooperation of the museums and the great private collections of France with our own museum, in its extraordinary undertaking.

Second only to the glorious Jupiter and Antiope, by Watteau, at the exhibition is the Mezzetin of that master from our own collection. And if the early David from the Louvre tells us in the pinkness of the flesh and the daintiness in painting how much the grim republican of later days learned from the century of his birth, our own Death of Socrates by the master reveals the same fact, and with more of nobility. Falling once again into thoughts of the relationship of different periods, we remark that Targillière appears here as an eighteenth-century master, while the Wildenstein Galleries are even now showing him as a man of the seventeenth. And who could see the two gemlike Chardins lent by Baron de Rothschild, or The Hare by that master, and fail to bridge the long span between the austerities of Le Nain, two hundred years ago, and those of Cézanne—but yesterday gone from us.

The temptation to discuss the exhibition in terms of the history of art assails us again as we stand before two masterpieces of sculpture: the bust by Lemoyne, born just after the close of the seventeenth century, and the one by Houdon, who lived on into the second quarter of the nineteenth. But in the presence of that marvel of character, the old soldier's portrait by the earlier artist (a loan from Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.), as before the poetic life in the features of the young naval officer by the later man (lent by J. Pierpont Morgan), the immediate delight of the eyes and the mind drives away all sense of time and its passing. Its bringing in of changes in ideas seems as unreal as its material ravaging when we look at these immortal things. As for the lesser enchantments of Falconet and Pajou—before the beauty of the Child with the Cage by Pigalle I refuse to admit the word lesser—one sees this exhibition as an irresistible ambassador from the Century of Grace. To such a being the words spoken of Pericles apply again; for in surest truth "the goddess of persuasion hung upon his lips." And, since this line of classical artists has led us back to Athens once more, I refer you to the bust by Chinard just at the door by which you may be leaving. Its pure line and planes are like those of that antiquity which was reborn with Pompeii in the later eighteenth century; it makes the combination of new, abounding vigor and yet reserve that is characteristic of its revolutionary period. And it is a woman, living today as she was a hundred and more years ago; and so, like this whole art which is still our own, despite everything, it is a triumphant answer to those who

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would tell us of the "Decline of the West." Smilingly, from the depths of her tradition and of her blitheness, Paris replies with the motto on her coat of arms: *Fluctuat nec mergitur.*

WALTER PACH

Drama

The Apocalypse of St. Clifford

CLIFFORD ODETS was given every encouragement to let himself go. Unfortunately he chose to be as little critical of his work as his admirers had been, and the result is simply that his latest play seems like nothing so much as an improbable burlesque of "Awake and Sing." Apparently the idea was that if a play about a somewhat neurotic family in the Bronx was good, then a play about a madhouse similarly located would be very much better. And if this theory is accepted, then "Paradise Lost" (Longacre Theater) must certainly mark the uttermost reach of the author's genius.

Never in the course of more than a decade of persistent theatergoing have I seen quite so much of madness and woe, or quite such a rich variety of sins, felonies, and other torts, legal and moral, crowded into one evening. As the play opens, the most likable of the dramatis personae is depriving his wife of her canary because the bird, being German, is presumably Nazi. Long before it was over I had lost track of my mental list of the crimes and perversities lovingly exhibited, and I apologize in advance for omissions from the catalogue; but in addition to those which I have forgotten the following topics are prominently featured—adultery, murder, impotence, arson, embezzlement, sexual repression, sleeping sickness, and whatever it is that causes middle-aged men to pinch girls in the subway. At ten-minute intervals one or another of the characters says either, "We are all crazy," or "Look what is happening to the world"; but the remark is always merely the cue for more of the same in the way of action. Perhaps someone calls up on the phone to say that one of the sons has been shot by the police in the midst of a felony; perhaps the business partner of pater familias has hysterics on the couch and confesses that, being impotent, he naturally embezzled all the profits from the business. But in any event there is something doing every minute.

If one knew nothing of the author one might assume that the play was an unsuccessful attempt at the pure macabre, but in a statement issued to the press Mr. Odets warned all concerned that he was about to present them with a picture of the state of the middle class today, and we are left with the necessity of assuming that he asks us to believe his picture in some sense typical. Surely, if it were, even the solid foundations of the Bronx would not be standing this morning; and I find myself reminded of a page of pictures by Marcel Arnac, purporting to illustrate typical events in a druggist's family, which was once carried in one of the more disreputable comic magazines of France. In the first picture the head of the house was shown corrupting a child; in another the daughter was entertaining a Lesbian friend; in a third the youngest son was misbehaving in the toilet; and so on through the list. At the end was a picture of the outside of the shop, which bore the familiar Parisian sign, "Pharmacie Normale." Mr. Odets's family is equally typical.

My own faith in the reality of Mr. Odets's talents is sufficiently firm to make me quite sure that only the force of some strong delusion could make him guilty of such an atrocity, and I think that I know what that delusion is. Just as many a man in the past has gone mad from poring too long over the mysteries of the Apocalypse and come to see the Four Horsemen or the Whore of Babylon wherever he looked, so Mr. Odets has lost his reason (only temporarily, I hope) from too much brooding over the Marxian eschatology. For Marxism also does, of course, have its "science of last things," its vision of the process by which the end of the world will come about and of the portents by which the approach of the millennium will be announced. There will be wars and rumors of wars. But that is not all. The middle class, collapsing economically, will lose faith in itself. It will be seized with all sorts of neuroses, and finally it will expire miserably in the midst of its futilities, its corruptions, and its perversities—precisely as this strange family is expiring in the Bronx.

Being a stranger to Patmos and not the recipient of revelations, I do not know whether precisely this is sure to occur or not. Neither do I know whether or not those disorders now afflicting society are really the beginning of the end—just as I did not know in 1914 whether or not the particular war then breaking out was really the one dreamed of by St. John. But I am perfectly sure that Mr. Odets is at least ahead of events, that what he professes to have discovered has not happened yet, and that what he is giving us is not a picture of anything as it now exists but an apocalyptic vision of what he feels sure will happen and of what, being an impatient millennarian, he wants to believe is happening now. But he can be answered by thousands of citizens of the Bronx who, should they see the play, would reply with one voice in terms of the American folk phrase, "Home was never like this." If it were, then the revolution would be closer than even most of Mr. Odets's fellow-believers think that it is.

As for the writing in the piece, one may assume that it has skill of a kind because, if it did not, the play would seem even more preposterous than it does. And as for the acting, one may conclude by the same logical process that it must be good also, since the antics of the characters seem more absurd in retrospect than they did when taking place. Perhaps I should also report that the audience was divided into those who snickered and those who sat tightly on their seats waiting for every opportunity to applaud. But if I am to mention that fact, perhaps I should mention another. I noticed that at least one of the persistent applauders was a certain member of the Group's own acting company who now happens to be left at liberty by the closing of "Weep for the Virgins."

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Contributors to This Issue

LOUIS FISCHER is *The Nation's* Moscow correspondent.

L. O. PRENDERGAST is a Los Angeles journalist now living in Mexico City.

CARLETON BEALS is the author of "The Inside Story of Huey Long."

H. S. GRANT is a Toledo newspaperman.

CARLOS HUDSON is the working secretary of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference.

MARK VAN DOREN is the author of "A Winter Diary and Other Poems."

VERA MICHELES DEAN is editor of the publications of the Foreign Policy Association.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR is professor of applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary.

H. S. JENNINGS, professor of zoology at John Hopkins University, is at present Eastman visiting professor at Oxford.

LIVINGSTON WELCH has just finished two years of research in philosophy at Cambridge University.

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